

# THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE

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A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF MARITIME HISTORY & ARTS

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Volume 54, No. 1

Winter 1994

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Support of the journal depends upon receipts from subscriptions; no payment is made for contributions or for editorial work. Subscriptions are accepted only for complete volumes, which coincide with the calendar year. In return for subscriptions received after the beginning of the year, subscribers will receive the numbers that have already appeared in the

current volume, as well as the numbers that will be published during the remainder of the year. Single copies are \$8.50 each in 1993. Certain complete volumes of back issues are available, although in cases where the supply is greatly reduced some numbers are sold only as parts of complete volumes.

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*The American Neptune* (ISSN 0003-0155) is published quarterly at \$32.00 per year for domestic subscribers, \$35.00 per year for foreign subscribers, and \$8.50 per single issue, by the Peabody Museum of Salem and Essex Institute, Incorporated, East India Square, Salem, Massachusetts, 01970. To subscribe, write to *The American Neptune*, Publications Department, enclosing a check or money order in U. S. dollars made payable to *The American Neptune*, or your credit card number (M/C, A/E, or Visa), expiration date, and signature. Manuscripts, books for listing, and correspondence should be addressed to the Managing Editor. Second-class postage is paid at Salem, Massachusetts, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Neptune*, Publications Department, Peabody Essex Museum, East India Square, Salem, Massachusetts 01970-0783.

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SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS



PUBLISHED BY THE PEABODY MUSEUM OF SALEM AND ESSEX INSTITUTE, INCORPORATED  
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BOOKCRAFTERS, FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA

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## Editor's

## Note

An important element of maritime history is the arts. Maritime arts range from paintings to scrimshaw to the graceful carving of figureheads to fine porcelain and metalwork and music. *The American Neptune* has recognized this important aspect of maritime studies since its founding, most notably in the pictorial supplements published since the late 1950s. Greater emphasis will be placed on this subject in the future and we welcome contributions. Daniel Finamore of our editorial staff and curator of maritime history at the Peabody Essex Museum has generously agreed to assume responsibility in this area. In addition to examinations of individual objects or topics, we expect to review exhibitions where appropriate. These actions are to assist our readers to keep abreast of activities and research in the field of maritime studies. We remain interested in material culture, welcoming submissions on shipwrecks or other relevant subjects.

One of the most fascinating recent exhibitions of American marine art is the work of George Curtis (1816-1881). His paintings were collected for a special exhibit at the Peabody Essex Museum which opened in November and runs to 15 March 1994. Curtis's paintings reflect a New England artistic tradition which incorporates elements of the luminist school. His expressive use of light is a principal feature of his work. The painting of Charlestown Navy Yard reproduced below is representative of Curtis's mature style. To accompany the exhibit a catalog was

published entitled *Coming to Light* (Peabody Essex Museum Collections 129, no. 4 [October 1993]) and is available from the museum shop.

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The Francis B. Lothrop, Jr. Award is awarded annually to the authors of the best articles to appear in *The American Neptune*. First prize for 1993 was awarded to Donald A. Petrie for "The Ransoming of *Eliza Swan*," and second prize went to Jane E. Allen for "Lying at the Port of Philadelphia: Vessel Types 1725-1775."

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Readers of *The American Neptune* will be saddened to learn of the death of Russell W. Knight. Russell was a devoted supporter of maritime history and a member of our editorial board since 1970. He was also a trustee and benefactor of the Peabody Essex Museum, where the Department of Maritime Art and History was named in his honor and where he endowed the curatorial chair. Museum volunteers will not soon forget the special Friday brown bag luncheons he organized in the basement storage rooms. He gave of himself and offered encouragement to others. We will miss him.

TIMOTHY J. RUNYAN

Cleveland, Ohio



George Curtis, *Charlestown Navy Yard*, oil on canvas. Photo courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum.



# Skippers on the Nile in Ancient Times

LIONEL CASSON

Those who write about life on the sea during the past few centuries can draw upon the actual words of the people involved — diaries, letters, the memoirs of skippers or sailors, even, in recent years, taped conversations. Their narrative takes on a vivid immediacy when they cite, say, some despairing entry from a ship's log or a skipper's verbatim description of a tense stand-off with his crew. Those who deal with the ancient world have no such material at their disposal. For the most part they have to rely on the accounts of ancient historians, whose information was usually second or thirdhand, or the testimony of archaeological findings, or other mute sources. But there is, as it happens, one brief period in one particular place that, thanks to two circumstances coming together, is an exception — the Nile around the middle of the third century B.C.

The first circumstance concerns ancient writing paper. The commonest was a sturdy and relatively cheap form made from strips of the reeds of the papyrus plant. This grew almost exclusively along the Nile, so inevitably papyrus paper was the kind used throughout Egypt, but it was exported all over the ancient world as well. In lands outside of Egypt, rainfall caused the destruction of such paper: when discarded, it disintegrated in the damp earth and vanished. Within Egypt, however, most of which gets rain rarely or not at all, papyrus documents that ended up in the trash just lay there and gradually acquired a protective blanket of the country's arid sands. At the beginning of the last century, random pieces came to light and caught the attention of the scholarly world, which swiftly recognized their value. By the end of the century archaeologists were excavating for them. As a result of their systematic finds plus the casual finds of peasants, Egypt has bestowed on historians a treasure trove of personal papers of all kinds, from the correspondence of high officials in impeccable script to scrawled laundry lists. They date chiefly from 300 B.C. to A.D. 600, the centuries when the country was ruled first by the Ptolemies and then (after Cleopatra, the last of their

line, put an asp to her bosom) by the emperors of Rome. The vast majority are in Greek, the language of the government and the literate population.

The second circumstance is the presence among the myriad documents that have emerged from Egypt's sands of a unique group, a collection of some two thousand documents from the files of a certain Zenon. He was a Greek from Asia Minor who migrated to Egypt toward the middle of the third century B.C. and from about 256 to 247 was managing agent of a large estate that belonged to a very high and immensely wealthy court official.<sup>1</sup> It was a job that by its nature involved much paperwork, and Zenon was the kind who could not bear to part with anything in his files; at his death they went *en masse* into the trash, and there they lay for over two millennia until about 1914-1915, when peasants came upon the accumulation and unearthed it. Zenon had multifarious duties: he dealt, his papers show, with the raising and selling of the estate's crops, with payments to the estate's staff, with the demands of his employer, the purchasing of supplies, the reckoning of accounts, and so on, including — to come, finally, to what concerns maritime historians — the operation of a fleet of Nile boats that the estate either owned or chartered.

Along with all his other correspondence, Zenon squirreled away the letters, reports, and memos he received from their commanders, and he has thereby preserved for us, for the first and only time, the actual words of ancient seamen. These skippers ran vessels that were manned by crews of half a dozen or less and carried no more than a few dozen tons of cargo, and their voyages were limited to the waters of a single river, but, as their words reveal, their problems were different only in degree from those that would bedevil the commanders of oceangoing freighters centuries in the future.

1. For a concise summary of Zenon's career and the status of his employer, see E. Turner in *Cambridge Ancient History* 2d ed. vii. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 141-4.



Nile boats of the early first century B.C. appear in details of a mosaic in the Palazzo Barberini at Palestrina. The vessel with ornamented stem and sternpost and elegant cabin (right) was probably a yacht for ferrying the rich, government officials, etc. The other (far right) is a plain work boat; Zenon's skippers may well have sailed craft like it.



Take, for example, the relations between a skipper and his home office. The home office, one document reveals, was just as adept in the third century B.C. as in later ages at putting a skipper in an impossible position. The document is headed "Memo to Zenon from Captain Phamounis." The name is not Greek but Egyptian, and this is what we would expect. By Zenon's day the Ptolemies had been ruling Egypt for only a little over half a century, and most of their Greek subjects, like Zenon, had been in the country for even less. Few of them could have known the river as well as the natives who had been sailing it for centuries. The memo is expressed in good Greek set down in a practiced hand; Phamounis had called upon a professional scribe to draw it up for him. He writes:

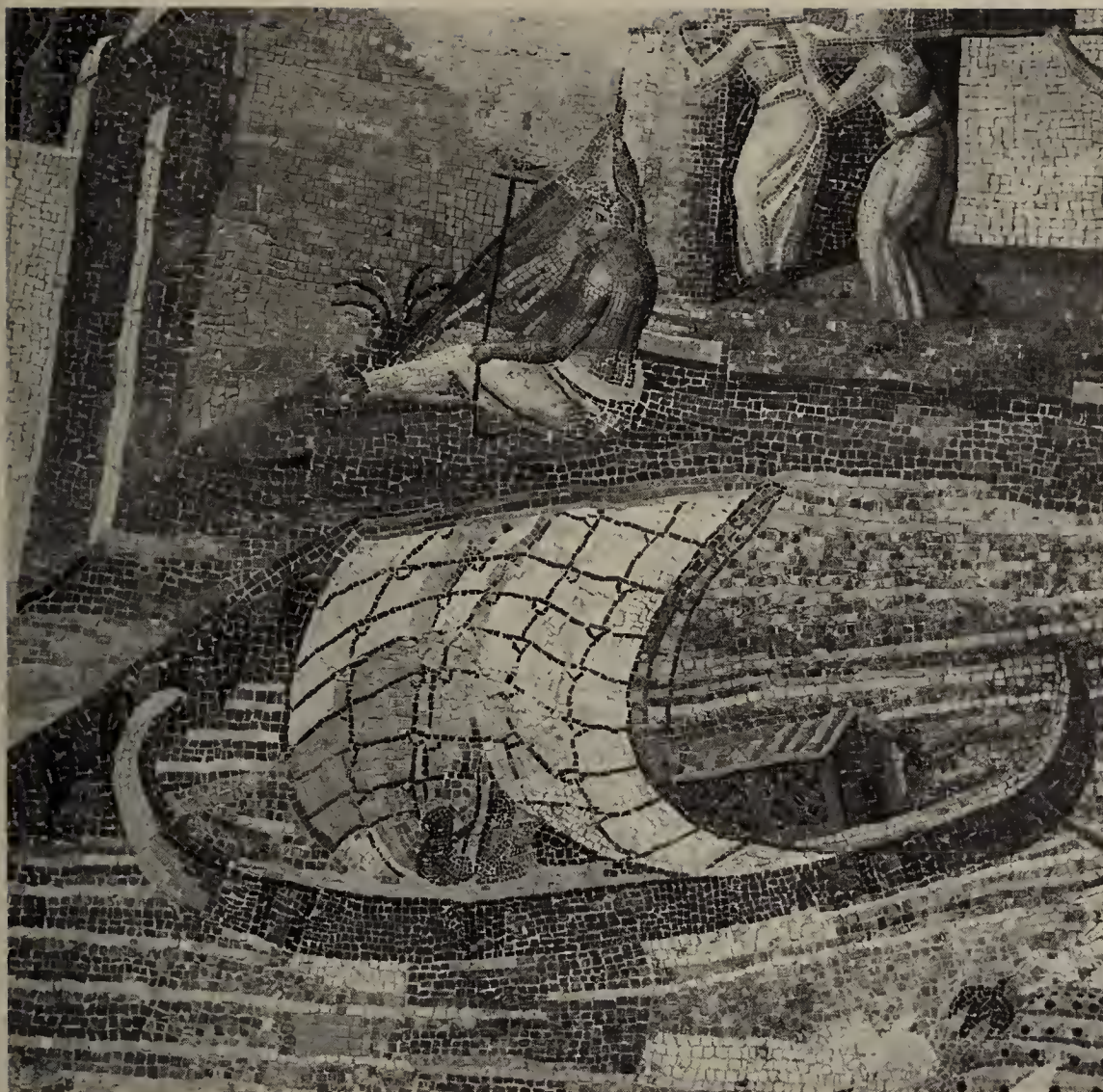
You ordered Sosos to come down to the river and take over the boat from me. Three days have already passed, and he hasn't come yet. I've already sold my tunic so the stevedores could have the bare necessities. You know that Proitos went off with everything we had. So I beg you, please, send someone who will take over the boat. There are six

of us in the boat, and I have to return the men to the place from where I brought them out. If you can, help me with a bit of cash – I'll get it back to you whenever you think right – so that I don't have to sell my clothes and I can be released from here as quickly as possible.<sup>2</sup>

Sosos, as we know from Zenon's other papers, was a trusted Greek slave of his who often acted as his commercial agent. Zenon could hardly be sending the likes of him to replace Phamounis as skipper; obviously Sosos was to get to the boat, release commander and crew, and presumably take the boat out of service. It could well have been a time of year when shipping on the river had begun to slack off. Proitos, as we also know from mention in other papers, was a Greek employee of Zenon's who frequently carried out assignments that involved handling considerable sums of

2. W. Westermann, et al., eds., *Zenon Papyri: Business Papers of the Third Century B.C. dealing with Palestine and Egypt* (New York, 1934), i 44 (hereafter *P. Col. Zen.*), with emendations as listed in P. Pestman, *A Guide to the Zenon Archive* (*Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava* xxi, Leiden, 1981), 125.





money. It seems that on this occasion Zenon had sent him to pick up the boat's receipts, since she had finished her voyage, and he did so thorough a job that he cleaned Phamounis out, leaving him with no funds for expenses. The poor fellow had to sell his shirt in order to pay the stevedores who did the unloading at his last stop and, if we are to take him literally, unless Zenon advanced him some cash, he anticipated selling off the rest of his wardrobe to get the money for transporting the crew back to their hometown.

There is another document from Phamounis in Zenon's files, headed "Financial report on the boat."<sup>3</sup> On this occasion Phamounis had no money problems at all; he was, in fact, way ahead. But he did have the problem that skippers of all ages at all times run into — repairs. The report starts with a list of expenses incurred during the first month of the run (the amounts are expressed in drachmas and obols; there were six obols to the drachma):

lines	5 ob.
towing cable	1 dr. 2 ob.
another bow line	3 ob.
tallow	2 ob.
rushes	3 ob.
anchor	3 dr.
nails	2½ ob.
oars and boat pole	2 dr. 5 ob.

Five months later the boat must have sprung a leak, because he adds:

rushes for caulking the boat	<u>2 dr. 3 ob.</u>
total	13 dr.

Phamounis either forgot a 4½ ob. expense or he was not too good at addition: the actual total of the preserved figures is not 13 dr. but 12 dr. 1½ ob.

The list of items that had to be replaced points to some such scenario as this: Phamounis moored to wait out a storm, the cable parted, and not only did he lose his anchor but water washed over the deck, carrying off lines and other gear on it. The rest of the voyage, however, except for the repair of a leak so minor it was

3. *P. Col. Zen.* i 43.



done by the crew, was a skipper's dream. Phamounis had no expenses besides the material for caulking, he kept picking up freight receipts from Zenon's agents at the ports along the river, and he even got a pleasant surprise from the boss himself, money "for a goose for the holiday." The receipts he ended up with totalled 36 dr., so if we deduct his figure of 13 for expenses, he came out 26 dr. in the black on the bottom line.

The collection of these receipts was vital: as Zenon's correspondence with his skippers shows, these are what they drew on for all their expenses during a voyage, from the wages of the crew to emergency repairs. Phamounis, for example, on his other voyage, had to sell his shirt because Proitos went off with the funds from his receipts.

One of the reports in Zenon's file<sup>4</sup> includes, along with outlays for shipping jars to hold the cargo and wages for captain and crew, the following:

to sailmakers	5 dr. 2 ob.
nails	2 ob.
to sawyers	4½ ob.
forestay, lifts	2 dr. 4 ob.
to a carpenter	3 ob.
sailyard	8 dr.

The skipper of this boat may have run into a worse blow than the one that hit Phamounis, a blow so bad that it tore the sail and caused the forestay and lifts to part; then, with the lifts no longer providing support, the yard cracked. To judge from the payments to sawyers and a carpenter, there must have been hull damage too.

When the repairs were more than a crew could deal with, a skipper perforce had to go to a shipyard. Since work done there would be too costly to come out of his receipts, the home office had to provide the money, and that required getting Zenon's approval before going ahead. Take, for example, this letter from Pais, another of Zenon's Egyptian skippers. Pais opens by announcing that he has left on a voyage upstream, tells that he was being pestered by the collector of one of the river taxes, mentions a few other matters, and then says:

If you agree, write me to have the boat repaired. For it's a good time; the shipwrights are free. And it will pay. As things are now, since the boat is old, nobody comes to deal with us. . . . Write me so that the three of us [presumably he and two crewmen] don't just sit around in the boat. We're not taking

anything in so we don't have the necessities of life.<sup>5</sup>

Pais was in somewhat the same sort of spot as Phamounis had been. The boat was in such bad shape it could not handle any business; without business, there were no freight receipts; without freight receipts, there was no cash to buy "the necessities of life."

A few months later Pais writes again, and from this letter we see that Zenon has agreed to the repairs but, as so often happens, the job turns out to be bigger than anticipated. Among other things, it required shiptimber, and that complicated matters. Egypt is wellnigh treeless. The Ptolemies, with the royal treasury to draw on, could afford to import pine from Asia Minor and cedar from Lebanon for their war galleys, but what grew locally had to do for these humble Nile craft. This meant chiefly acacia and sycamore, and there was by no means any great profusion of either:

Pais to Zenon, greetings.

You know that I arranged with you to repair the prow of the boat. But now it's turned out to involve dismantling and repairing the whole boat. We've searched for wood everywhere. We've located with great difficulty one piece of acacia on which Demetrios, collector of the grain-tax, put down a deposit of 50 dr. Please write him to let us have it. It's worth 80 dr. . . . Let's keep moving till we get enough wood and keep the shipwrights from hanging around doing nothing. So write me about this. I received 60 dr. from Spondates.<sup>6</sup>

At least Pais no longer has to worry about money to buy "the necessities of life": Spondates was one of Zenon's agents, and the cash that he delivered must have come from Zenon to tide Pais over. Spondates himself had been off on a hunt for wood for some other skipper, as we learn from a letter, dated a few months earlier, that he sent to Zenon (Spondates was of Persian extraction, and he apparently felt his Greek was good enough to let him dispense with scribes; the result is a piece of writing in a picturesque Greek spangled with mistakes in spelling and grammar):

Spondates to Zenon, greetings.

You wrote me to send sycamore wood to Kersat. As soon as the mules arrive, we'll load and

5. C. Edgar, ed., *Zenon Papyri* (Ann Arbor, 1931), i 60 (hereafter *P. Mich.*).

6. *Papiri greci e latini* (Pubblicazioni della Società Italiana per la ricerca dei papiri greci e latini in Egitto, Florence 1912-1979), iv 382 (hereafter *PSI*) as emended; (see Pestman, *Guide to the Zenon Archive*, 142).

4. C. Edgar, ed., *Zenon Papyri, Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire* (Cairo, 1925-1940), iv 59754 (hereafter *P. Cair. Zen.*).



send it off. They [presumably the shipwrights] told you that Palous had said there was no acacia wood. On the 15th [this letter is dated the 17th] the muleteers brought some from Mea, while on the 16th, when they didn't show up, he brought some in a cart. I had written you to let you know that they're not short of acacia wood, they have enough, but there will be a need for sycamore, since what has been cut and bought won't be enough. The ibis-feeders, the ones from Mea, approached me yesterday willing to sell pretty cheaply. Send Theopompos to buy, so the shipwrights won't have an excuse [for not working]. For they're scoundrels and always looking for an excuse.<sup>7</sup>

Palous, as we know from mention of him elsewhere in Zenon's papers, was a skipper; here he must be in command of a boat being repaired, or perhaps being built from scratch, at Kersat, which was one of the ports on the Nile near the estate. Pais, when discussing the shipyard work to be done to his boat, talked about keeping "the shipwrights from hanging around doing nothing." Spondates took an even dimmer view of them: to him they were "scoundrels always looking for an excuse" not to work, and the excuse they had come up with this time, or so he implies, was that Palous had told them there was no acacia on hand. The truth of the matter was that two loads had arrived. The muleteers had brought in one load, and, when they failed to show up to haul the second, Palous, who was obviously a man of action, got hold of a cart and took care of the hauling himself. For the sycamore that was needed there was a ready solution: a nearby sanctuary for the sacred ibises had a stand of trees, and the men in charge were offering the wood at an attractive price.

As these examples show, Zenon's skippers were responsible and hardworking. They were ambitious as well. They could, if they wanted, work on a fixed salary, making as good a wage as Zenon paid his highest level clerks (the crewmen didn't do badly either; they earned only 25 percent less than their skippers), and there were those who were content with this. There were also those who were ready to take risks in order to do better. For example, among Zenon's papers is a memo from one of his skippers — his name is lost — outlining a proposition: if Zenon is willing to keep paying the annual government assessment on the boat (a hefty amount, close to 300 dr.) he offers to:

. . . pay you [i.e., Zenon] a fee of 500 dr. . . . and, if you have need of the boat, it will be available to

you with the appropriate amount of the fee and the wages being for your account.<sup>8</sup>

He will, in other words, relieve Zenon of the cost of the crew and other running expenses plus pay him a fee of 500 dr., and in return pocket all the profits the boat makes. Zenon will continue to pay the annual assessment and, in return, get the use of the boat at cost whenever he wants. No time limit is set on such use; the man offering the proposition no doubt had a pretty good idea of how much Zenon ordinarily used the boat, and he was gambling that that would not change. But what if Zenon took advantage of the situation to use it far more than hitherto? Any time spent hauling for him was that much less available for hauling at a profit.

Pais, whose correspondence we cited a moment ago, was just as ambitious as this anonymous skipper but a cannier businessman. In the letter in which he urges Zenon to approve repairing his boat because she is so "old, nobody wants to deal with us," he adds:

. . . if you want, you'll be able to charter it. I myself undertake — on the understanding, in writing, that it is for exclusive use — to pay you 800 dr.<sup>9</sup>

Pais was willing to pay Zenon not 500 dr. but all of 800 — only, however, on the condition, nailed down in writing, that he was to have exclusive operation of the craft; there was to be no turning her over at cost whenever Zenon wanted it.

A number of Zenon's skippers worked on a profit-sharing basis; in other words, they were willing to give up a fixed salary for a chance of doing better but they stopped there. They were not willing to bind themselves to a fixed fee and the obligation of a boat's running expenses with high hopes of doing very much better. The split was usually fifty-fifty, as we can tell from a financial accounting sent to Zenon by one of the men on such an arrangement. It covers hauls to four different river ports; here is a sample of how he reports them:<sup>10</sup>

Freight receipts [for the haul]	
to Heracleopolis . . . of wheat	39 dr.
Expenses for the boat	<u>13 dr.</u>
Balance	26 dr.
My share	13 dr.
Your share	13 dr.

8. Ibid. iv 59649. 15-19.

9. *P. Mich.* i 60. 9-11.

10. *P. Cair. Zen.* iv 59753. 7-11.

7. *P. Cair. Zen.* ii 59270.

After listing the four hauls, he summarizes Zenon's gross take from them, deducts a few last-minute outlays he had made for Zenon's account, and puts down the net figure for Zenon's share. Then he adds:

I took another 2½ dr. from your share and 2½ dr. from mine and set them aside for expenditures on the boat.<sup>11</sup>

In other words, like a prudent businessman, he set up a kitty of 5 dr. to take care of unforeseen contingencies. It was a wise precaution, because one turned up immediately, as the final entry reveals:<sup>12</sup>

Because the men with me left,	
I paid to the man with me now	
to keep the boat from being	
left alone	2 dr.
I took the sail up [the bank of the	
river] to hide it. The police	
found me. I paid them	<u>1 dr.</u>
total	3 dr.
balance	2 dr.

The skipper, it seems, had paid off the crew and they had departed. Since he apparently had to go off himself and leave the boat for a while, he hired someone ("the man with me now") to stay aboard as boat-watcher. He also decided to take the precaution of hiding the sail. There was good reason for being so careful: piracy on the river was a serious problem. Indeed, an official decree presumably in force at this time stipulates that vessels sailing on the river were to moor only at "designated places" and any commanders who were caught by storm and forced to put in elsewhere were to hurry to the nearest police post and report their position so that a guard could be sent out.<sup>13</sup> As the skipper clambered up the bank of the river clutching his sail, the local constabulary caught sight of him and stopped him. So far as we can tell, he had done nothing wrong, but he probably considered spending a drachma on baksheesh preferable to spending the time and effort it would take to convince a magistrate he was not running off with someone else's property but just going off to hide his own.

Through Zenon's papers we get glimpses of the everyday world of the skippers of his fleet: we learn, through their very words, of the problems they faced, from repairing storm damage to running out of funds, from getting hold of proper shiptimber to bedding down a vessel so that river pirates won't make off with her. We sense their ambitions, appreciate the risks they were ready to take to better themselves. The documents throw light, to be sure, only on the captains of these little craft that hauled grain and other cargo up and down the Nile in the third century B.C. It is, admittedly, a very narrow and dim beam. In an area of total darkness, however, even that is welcome.



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11. Ibid., iv 59753. 62-64.

12. Ibid., iv 59753. 65-75.

13. See L. Casson, *The Periplus Maris Erythraei* (Princeton, 1989), 273.



# Alfred Thayer Mahan and East Asia: An Evaluation

JAMES FETZER

In 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt found himself in disagreement with Alfred Thayer Mahan. The disagreement was about the desirability of building all-big-gun battleships. Mahan opposed the idea, which Roosevelt had come to support. While enlisting the young William Sims to counter Mahan's objections, Roosevelt suggested that it was necessary to make "headway against the great Mahan; that it was up to us to convince the public that the great Mahan was wrong."<sup>1</sup> The president, who for years had sought and received advice from Mahan, referred to his naval mentor as the "great Mahan" out of recognition of Mahan's status in the eyes of the American public. Although some in the United States Navy thought Mahan's naval pronouncements unhelpful or hopelessly outdated, Roosevelt's comments reflected Mahan's enormous public prestige.<sup>2</sup>

Mahan's considerable reputation was based on his work as a naval historian, but the public's most frequent exposure to Mahan was through his commentary on international politics. Many of Mahan's magazine articles, the main vehicle for popularizing his views, were about aspects of American foreign policy or the current state of world politics. Even those articles on naval subjects were often filled with Mahan's observations on international relations. Mahan was one of America's most popular interpreters of international politics.

Frequently, Mahan commented on East Asian affairs and the role of the United States in East Asian politics. But how astute was Mahan's treatment of East Asia? Were his observations on the region informed and accurate? Were his judgments clear and sensible? Did Mahan produce insights that proved useful to his contemporaries or future generations of Americans?

Mahan's views about East Asia were, in part, an expression of his general views about international

politics. Mahan saw a world characterized by an ongoing competition among the major nation-states. This competition originated in the quest for commercial and economic advantage. Markets for export and investment along with sources of raw materials constituted the basic factors motivating actions in the international arena. While Mahan identified economic factors as a central motivation, he also noted that the commercial competition in the world was frequently carried out by non-commercial means. Political arrangements and military relationships were the key devices of international politics. Mahan, therefore, focused most of his attention on political and military matters.<sup>3</sup>

Mahan had no doubt whatsoever about the proper role of the United States in this worldwide competition. The United States, he believed, had to be an active participant. Mahan, as an advocate of the "large policy," saw American prosperity and security linked to playing a significant role in international affairs. There were no advantages to being inactive on the world scene. "We can now advance," Mahan observed, "but, the conditions of the world being what they are, if we do not advance, we recede."<sup>4</sup>

Not surprisingly, Mahan also emphasized a naval component in his formulations about America's role in the world. Since the worldwide commercial competition often turned on the use of non-commercial means, the United States was required to pay attention to the development of such means. If America hoped to compete and exert influence beyond its continental borders, Mahan argued, the United States had to develop naval power. The geographic position of the United States required this. Mahan summarized this imperative as follows:

3. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Problem of Asia* (Boston, 1905), 157-159; Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Retrospect and Prospect* (Boston, 1903), 48-51.

4. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power* (Boston, 1897), 33.

1. Quoted in Robert Seager II, *Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Man and His Letters* (Annapolis, MD, 1977), 525.

2. Ibid., 519-535.

The world has grown smaller . . . . But, while distances have shortened, they remain for us water distances, and, however short, for political influence they must be traversed in the last resort by a navy, the indispensable instrument by which, when emergencies arise, the nation can project its power beyond its own shoreline.<sup>5</sup>

Mahan's views about the shape of an American navy, in turn, were made with an eye on the increasing geographic breadth of American foreign policy. These views about the shape of the navy were not always astute or up-to-date. Mahan's argument against the all-big-gun battleship, for example, was handicapped by his failure to keep abreast of developments in naval ordnance.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, Mahan's recommendations about the navy were always connected to the idea that American interests were engaged broadly around the world, encompassing areas such as East Asia.

In sum, Mahan's general world view encouraged the United States to enter the great power competition in East Asia so as to gain the commercial benefits to be found there. In order to be an effective competitor in East Asia, the United States would need to display political acuity backed up by naval power.

Any evaluation of Mahan's specific views on East Asia must begin by noting that he did not possess a deep knowledge of the area. His experience there was limited. Mahan's one collection of articles that focused exclusively on Asia, published as *The Problem of Asia*, was not the product of an intense study of East Asia. Mahan tended to view East Asia, particularly the East Asian mainland, as a place where foreign powers acted out their designs. Mahan, for example, viewed China largely as a pawn in the game of Great Power politics or as a place where "Anglo-Saxon civilization" might carry out a mission of regeneration. There was little room in this perspective for a serious examination of the indigenous forces shaping China's development.

Mahan, however, did not feel that a lack of knowledge precluded insightful commentary. He employed what he described as a subordination method of historical inquiry. According to this approach, the historian needed to discover the basic principles which guided historical development. Once these principles were understood, the historian possessed the means to grasp deductively a wide range of events by organizing facts around the guiding principles. Mahan was sure that he grasped the basic principles of international politics. Since the principles were of universal validity, they could be readily applied to any area of the world and

produce rich insights. It was in this spirit that Mahan approached the problems of East Asia. It is probably not too unkind to note that this method allowed one to fashion a large number of income-producing articles. As Mahan's biographer observed:

In sum, the practical beauty of the subordination method was that the use of a few carefully selected facts and their careful grouping around a "ruling thought" permitted speed of writing and no great knowledge of history.<sup>7</sup>

Mahan's views on East Asia, then, were made up of a few facts and "ruling thoughts" combined with his conception of United States interest in the region. In general, Mahan defined American interest in East Asia in terms of gaining access to important parts of the area and defending America from threats emanating from East Asia. Access to important areas, Mahan observed, was advanced by the acquisition of territory. Indeed, Mahan saw the turn-of-the-century American territorial acquisitions as elements of positioning. He observed:

The canal, Hawaii, and the Philippines are valuable to us as positions even more than as possessions. In the problem of Eastern Asia, . . . they are important as facilitating our access to the seas of China and to the valley of the Yangtze, and as furnishing territorial support to our action there.<sup>8</sup>

To Mahan, moreover, positioning in relation to key areas was also important in terms of gaining naval position. This consideration caused him, as a member of the Naval Board, to recommend in 1898 that the United States establish a coaling station in the Chusan Islands near the mouth of the Yangtze.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, Mahan saw the necessity of defending the United States from threats emanating from East Asia. In the 1890s, Mahan's concerns in this regard appeared in his conviction that the United States must obtain Hawaii as a hedge against a future eastward push by an East Asian nation, particularly China. Mahan worried whether Hawaii was to be "an outpost of European civilization or of the comparative barbarism of China." He looked down the road and viewed with concern "the day when the vastness of China-now-inert may yield to one of those impulses which have in past ages buried civilization under a wave of barbarian invasion." This worry that China "may burst her barriers

5. Ibid., 148-149.

6. Seager, *Alfred Thayer Mahan*, 519-535.

7. Ibid., 433.

8. Mahan, *Retrospect and Prospect*, 34.

9. Alfred Thayer Mahan to John D. Long, August 1898, in Robert Seager II and Doris D. Maguire, eds., *Letters and Papers of Alfred Thayer Mahan*, 3 vols. (Annapolis, 1975), 2: 581-583, 590.





Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, from Robert Seager II, *Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Man and His Letters* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1977).

eastward as well as westward” easily led to the conclusion that Hawaii had to be controlled by a “great, civilized, maritime power.” The United States, argued Mahan, should fulfill this defensive role.<sup>10</sup> Once the United States had acquired Hawaii, this “yellow peril” dimension of Mahan’s point of view would become manifest in Mahan’s fears concerning Asian immigration to the United States.

10. Alfred Thayer Mahan to New York *Times*, 30 January 1893, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 2: 92-93; Mahan, *The Interest of America in Sea Power*, 31-32; Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, 88.

Views such as those just described start to demonstrate that Mahan’s subordination method of history was hardly an adequate substitute for a deep and informed interest in Asia. Mahan never made clear why China might “burst her barriers” and move across the Pacific, a course of action which the Chinese had resisted for over 2,000 years. Moreover, Mahan’s assertion that United States interest in East Asia was tied to access to areas such as China did not rest on any kind of rigorous analysis. Mahan failed to demonstrate, in fact or potential, that important commercial opportunities awaited the United States in East Asia. He accepted as a given that somehow there were important

economic gains to be derived by becoming involved in East Asian politics. The haziness about the commercial advantages to be gained accounts in part for Mahan's ambiguity about just how deeply the United States should become involved in East Asia.

The area of East Asian affairs that Mahan did discuss in detail was the position of foreign powers in China. By the late nineteenth century, China was being carved into spheres of influence by major powers. Mahan sought to identify how the United States should treat foreign spheres of influence in China so as to advance the principles of the Open Door. The Open Door idea promulgated by American leaders at the turn of the century emphasized, as Mahan did, maintaining commercial access to China. The Open Door policy also supported the preservation of the territorial integrity of China. Mahan vigorously embraced the Open Door idea but gave it his own twist.

Mahan saw the Open Door principle in broad terms encompassing not only commercial access but also the entrance into China of European thought and practices which were capable of remodeling China in a beneficial way. In European culture, Mahan observed, "is to be found the best prospect for the human race to realize the conditions most conducive to its happiness." Mahan placed Christian missionaries in the vanguard of the regenerating mission.<sup>11</sup> He did not, however, emphasize the preservation of Chinese territorial integrity as an important goal in itself. Instead, he contended that the integrity of China "is the concern of the United States, or any country asserting the Open Door, not as a matter of benevolence, but because it is essential to free access to Chinese markets."<sup>12</sup> The important point, then, was to prevent any one power from gaining a position of dominance which might threaten the access of others.

Mahan left little doubt as to the mechanism the United States should employ to advance its Open Door aspirations in China. The key to this task centered on the maintenance of a balance of power. Mahan's ideas about a balance of power accepted foreign spheres of influence in China as a given. The central job for the United States in this situation was to use its influence to help to ensure that no one power gained supremacy on the East Asian mainland. By contributing to a state of balanced antagonisms among the major powers in China, the United States would maintain at an affordable price both commercial and cultural access to China. "The maintenance of the Open Door," Mahan argued, "is the result of a balancing of forces; the forces of the

various states interested in the commercial development of China."<sup>13</sup>

Before the Russo-Japanese War, Mahan hoped that American diplomacy might assist in controlling Russian designs in East Asia. Mahan saw a Russia which "in obedience to natural law and race instinct is working geographically to the southward in Asia."<sup>14</sup> If unchecked, this Russian advance might produce Russian dominance in China. Mahan urged American policy to assist a coalition of "sea powers" in controlling Russian influence. This meant that the United States should be sympathetic to efforts by Great Britain and Japan to stand in Russia's way.<sup>15</sup>

Mahan was not, however, an advocate of removing Russia entirely from East Asia. His steady allegiance was to maintaining a state of balanced antagonisms in East Asia. This meant that Russia had to be conceded a place in East Asian affairs. Indeed, Mahan felt there was good reason for Russia to remain active in China. Mahan reasoned that Russia was not only moving southward in China, but along a broad front of the Asian land mass. If Russian attention was directed toward Manchuria, he observed, other interested parties were present to control Russian designs. If Russia, on the other hand, should turn toward the Persian Gulf, then only Great Britain would likely be present to block Russia. The former situation, Mahan argued, was preferable to the latter one.<sup>16</sup> The idea was to keep Russia tied down in China.

This kind of thinking represented an interesting aspect of Mahan's analysis of East Asian affairs. Mahan, to his credit, often thought in global terms. He was sensitive to the possibility that events in one part of the world might exert a major influence on the situation half a globe away.

This was the case as Mahan pondered the threats to the Open Door which existed after the Russo-Japanese War. He was inclined to see Japan as a possible dominant East Asian power. But more than this, Mahan clearly recognized that Japan's fortunes in East Asia were tied to European international politics. As the Anglo-German rivalry grew in Europe, for instance, the attention and resources of both parties would be committed increasingly to Europe. If war came, this

11. Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, 150, 109-110, 167-168.

12. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Interest of America in International Conditions* (Boston, 1910), 183-184.

13. Ibid., 145, 180, 184, 190-191; Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, 101-104.

14. Mahan, *The Problem of Asia*, 26.

15. Ibid., 44, 63, 101-104, 133-134; Mahan, *Retrospect and Prospect*, 33-34; Mahan to Samuel Ashe, 23 September 1899, and Mahan to William McKinley, 2 September 1900, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 2: 658, 693.

16. Mahan to Leopold Maxse, 21 February 1902, 27 May 1902, 17 June 1904, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 12, 27, 99.



commitment would be close to complete. A European withdrawal meant diminished obstacles to Japanese designs in East Asia. Mahan therefore anticipated that the East Asian situation would be altered significantly, possibly to Japan's benefit, if European nations were required to look away from East Asia.<sup>17</sup> Such a situation did indeed arise after 1914.

This is not to suggest that Mahan was prescient. He did not fully anticipate, for example, the alignment of European nations which would occur before World War I.<sup>18</sup> Yet Mahan's range of vision was impressive. He had the capacity to see meaningful lines of connection between events separated by time and space. He deserves high marks for both attempting these connections and often making them astutely.

Mahan's range of vision, however, was not sufficient to eliminate a fundamental ambiguity concerning the proper extent of United States involvement in East Asia and China in particular. On one hand, parts of Mahan's writings indicate that East Asia was important to the United States. Mahan asserted that the Open Door idea concerning East Asia constituted, along with the Monroe Doctrine, one of the two fundamental principles of American foreign policy.<sup>19</sup> He also argued that events in East Asia could unfold in a way which might require the United States to fight over Asian issues. Like others in the American Navy, Mahan, after the Russo-Japanese War and during the Japanese immigration dispute, evidenced increased sensitivity to the possibility of war with Japan.<sup>20</sup> If war with Japan did come, Mahan observed, it would appear because of misunderstandings about the Open Door or because of "the inflammable prejudice of our Pacific population toward the Japanese resident."<sup>21</sup> This possibility of war led Mahan to urge a strong American naval presence in the Pacific and to recommend that the United States give serious consideration to stationing its concentrated battle fleet in the Pacific.<sup>22</sup>

17. Mahan, *The Interest of America in International Conditions*, 151-154, 198-206.

18. In 1902, Mahan informed his editor in England that "I cannot bring myself to look upon Russia and France as other than your inevitable enemies . . . ." Mahan to Leopold Maxse, 21 February 1902, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 12.

19. Mahan, *The Interest of America in International Conditions*, 178.

20. Richard Challener, *Admirals, Generals and American Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ, 1973), 232-237.

21. Mahan to Philip Andrews, 24 September 1910, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 355.

22. Mahan, *Interest of America in International Conditions*, 198-199; Mahan to Bouverie Clark, 28 January 1909, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 277-278.

Even with all this, there was much that Mahan said and did not say which suggested that the United States should not become too deeply involved in East Asia. Mahan never took the position that the United States should seek a dominant position in that area of the world. He observed that "it is not to the interest of the United States to propose to herself the object of supremacy in the Pacific."<sup>23</sup> Mahan's consistent advocacy of balanced antagonisms in East Asia was not formulated with a view that the United States should take the lead in any balance of power configuration. His hopes for a situation of balanced antagonisms were couched in terms of nations other than the United States taking the lead in organizing opposition to any nation seeking hegemony. As noted above, Mahan was aware that European developments might draw European attention away from Asia and create a state of affairs in which the United States and Japan confronted each other. But Mahan did not welcome such a confrontation. He preferred to hope that some other nation would be around to take the lead against Japan.<sup>24</sup>

One reason Mahan took this position was his basic haziness about the importance of American interests in East Asia. Mahan never demonstrated in detail that American interests on the East Asian mainland were vital ones. This was true about commercial access to East Asia as well as America's participation in the cultural regeneration of China. It seems likely that this vagueness about vital interests was a major reason why Mahan did not insist that the United States behave aggressively in East Asia in relation to other major powers. When this haziness combined with Mahan's awareness of how difficult it would be to hold the Philippines in the face of hostility from a power such as Japan, Mahan was inclined to be sympathetic to moderate United States action in East Asia.<sup>25</sup> Mahan refrained, for example, from any serious criticism of Theodore Roosevelt's policy in East Asia, which was clearly one in which a perception of limited interests prompted a cautious use of limited American means. Mahan's lack of criticism suggests that he approved of this moderate policy.

Mahan's ambiguous position also reflected a basic aspect of American East Asian policy before 1940. It was commonplace for American officials to proclaim

23. Mahan, *Interest of America in International Conditions*, 192.

24. Ibid., 204-212; Mahan to Philip Andrews, 24 September 1910, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 355.

25. For Mahan's analysis of the difficulties in fighting Japan, see his analysis of the early Orange Plan in Mahan to Raymond P. Rogers, 22 February 1911, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 381-388. For Mahan on the Philippines, see William Livezey, *Mahan on Sea Powers* (Norman, OK, 1980), 193-205.



boldly an allegiance to the Open Door idea and then proceed to act cautiously lest a bold pursuit of the Open Door lead to projects which were too dangerous or too expensive. American officials were clear about the dual objects of the Open Door — no foreign power dominant in China and commercial access. But they had not convinced themselves that the Open Door objectives deserved to be treated as vital American interests. This lack of conviction often led to cautious and moderate policy in behalf of the Open Door. Mahan's ambiguous position about East Asia was part and parcel of this larger tendency.

Mahan was not at all ambiguous about how the United States should prepare itself against the possibility of war with Japan. American naval strength featuring a concentrated battle fleet was the key. Mahan was obsessive concerning the principle of concentration. His great fear was that a division of the fleet would allow an otherwise inferior enemy to destroy the United States fleet in detail. By 1910, Mahan thought there was good reason to keep the fleet in the Pacific. But whether in the Atlantic or the Pacific, the fleet had to be kept concentrated. According to Mahan, "the military necessity of sustained concentration is as absolutely certain as anything human can be."<sup>26</sup>

Mahan has been criticized for this devotion to fleet concentration. Some have suggested that this allegiance to concentration was inappropriate in light of expanding American interests in the world. American interests in the Western Hemisphere, Europe, and the Pacific, it is argued, could not be served by a navy devoted to the preservation of a concentrated battle fleet. The principle of concentration did not fit a world in which the United States might face hostility both in Europe and Asia. The geographic range of twentieth-century American foreign policy, this argument goes, rendered obsolete Mahan's hallowed principle of concentration.<sup>27</sup>

This kind of criticism misses an important point about Mahan's and others' advocacy of concentration. The support of this principle rested upon a political assessment. The assessment was that the United States Congress and the American people would not support a full two-ocean navy. To Mahan and the General Board of the Navy, it was most unwise to consider any division of the fleet until a two-ocean standard was met, and they saw little chance of this occurring in the near

future. As Richard Challener notes, "Congressional reluctance to build the number of capital ships desired by the General Board made the achievement of such a [two-ocean] standard seem so far distant as to be virtually inconceivable." Mahan was aware that ideally the United States needed more than one concentrated battle fleet. The reality, however, was that Congress would not support a two-ocean navy. Given this situation, Mahan argued, the United States needed to maintain a concentrated battle fleet. It is difficult to argue that Mahan was wrong about this.<sup>28</sup>

Mahan should be given no credit, however, for keeping racial and cultural slurs out of his commentary on East Asia. He was very much a man of his time in that he espoused the view that white, Western Christians were superior to East Asians and, therefore, enjoyed certain privileges in relation to them.<sup>29</sup> This attitude was particularly apparent in Mahan's view of the Chinese. His comments about China were frequently accompanied by the assertion that the Chinese were in need of training or disciplining. The Chinese simply did not measure up to Mahan's fitness standards, outlined in the following comment:

Thus the claim of an indigenous population to retain indefinitely control of territory depends not upon a natural right, but upon political fitness, shown in the political work of governing, administering, developing in such a manner as to insure the natural right of the world at large that resources should not be left idle, but be utilized for the general good. Failure to do this, justifies in principle, compulsion from outside . . . .<sup>30</sup>

The "compulsion from outside" would be provided by the carriers of the Western civilization. There would be occasions, Mahan reasoned, when the Chinese would need to be disciplined. At the time of the Boxer uprising, Mahan likened the Chinese to children who were in need of "a good whaling" by the foreign powers.<sup>31</sup> In more benign moments, Mahan held out the hope that the presence of Christianity in China might make a substantial contribution to Chinese regeneration. Christian missionaries were the vehicles for transmitting European civilization to the needy Chinese. This being

26. Mahan to George Perkins, 11 January 1911, and Mahan to Theodore Roosevelt, 10 January 1910, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 372, 202; Mahan, *Interest of America in International Conditions*, 193; Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Naval Strategy* (Boston, 1911), 5-6.

27. Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (Bloomington, IN, 1977), 179-180.

28. Challener, *Admirals, Generals*, 249; Mahan to New York *Sun*, 28 January 1907, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 205-206.

29. For a stimulating analysis of how racial attitudes have appeared in American foreign policy, see Michael Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, 1987), 46-91.

30. Mahan, *Problem of Asia*, 98.

31. Mahan to Bouverie Clark, 19 December 1900, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 2: 700.



the case, Mahan argued, the fact that the Chinese might object to missionary activity was "not a valid argument for exclusion."<sup>32</sup> China was in need of tutelage and the Western powers were the proper tutors. During this period of instruction, Mahan argued, "it may perhaps be for the welfare of humanity that the Chinese people and territory should undergo a period of political division."<sup>33</sup>

Mahan was somewhat less patronizing when it came to Japan. He acknowledged that Japan had made major gains and deserved credit for this accomplishment. Even in this case, however, Mahan could not resist describing Japanese accomplishments in terms of the Western experience. "Japan," Mahan noted, "is repeating the experience of our Teutonic ancestors, as they came into contact with the Roman polity and the Christian Church."<sup>34</sup> There is little evidence to suggest that the Japanese were delighted to be designated latter-day Teutons.

Mahan also raised the specter of the "yellow peril" in connection with the issue of Japanese immigration to the United States. While Mahan hoped that the immigration crisis with Japan in 1907 would not produce war, he nevertheless remained opposed to Japanese immigration. His reasons were neither complex nor profound. Mahan simply felt that once the doors were open to Asian immigration, the western part of the United States would be taken over by Asiatics. The United States, Mahan argued, would not be able to "digest and assimilate the strong national and racial characteristics which distinguish the Japanese."<sup>35</sup> According to Mahan, "Asiatic immigration is against the spirit of the Monroe Doctrine; because, as they don't assimilate, they colonize, and virtually annex. Permitted, the Pacific slope would be Asiatic territory in 20 years."<sup>36</sup>

Mahan's tendency to expostulate in racial terms and to assign cultural inferiority is regrettable not only because it is offensive to most current standards of decency. In addition, Mahan's tendencies in this regard also made him less insightful as a commentator on international politics. Mahan could not readily conceive of a day when the Asiatic objects of imperialism would assert, in active and effective ways, a powerful nationalistic sense. Mahan's racial and cultural blinders did not permit him to see that a major theme of international affairs in the twentieth century would be the successful struggle of colonized people to assert some kind of independent identity.

Mahan, of course, was not alone in this shortcoming. But a truly insightful commentator must possess the gift of being *of* an age and yet, as an astute observer, *apart* from it. Mahan, in some ways a representative figure of his age, could not see past the assumptions and practices of imperialism, which he did so much to justify. As a consequence, an important part of the future of East Asia was not within the grasp of his foresight.



32. Mahan, *Problem of Asia*, 168.

33. Ibid., 66-67, Mahan, *Interest of America in International Conditions*, 137.

34. Mahan, *Problem of Asia*, 148-149.

35. Mahan to *New York Times*, 13 June 1913, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 497-498.

36. Mahan to Theodore Roosevelt, December 1911, Mahan to Leopold Maxse, 30 May 1907, July 30, 1907, Seager and Maguire, *Letters and Papers* 3: 435-436, 214, 221; Mahan, *Naval Strategy*, 197.

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# Commerce Raiding and Crisis: Guadeloupe, 1799-1802

H. J. K. JENKINS

In January 1799, a dispatch from the Royal Navy's Leeward Islands Command commented on the recent departure from Guadeloupe of its "Director . . . Victor Hugues."<sup>1</sup> Revolutionary Guadeloupe was essentially Hugues's personal creation,<sup>2</sup> and his regime was to be followed by a series of short-lived and ramshackle administrations which proved incapable of controlling the formidable entity which he had produced. Indeed, when the Preliminaries of the Peace of Amiens came into force towards the close of 1801, this Caribbean colony was widely viewed as being in revolt against France.

Commonly styled "The Colonial Robespierre," Victor Hugues was of Marseilles origin and had seen service as a public prosecutor in the metropolitan country. His recapture of Guadeloupe from the British during 1794 led to the abolition of slavery in the colony, in line with French Revolutionary legislation. Thereafter, he was to organize the whole population, of whatever racial origin, into a disciplined and purposeful grouping. His nature was fiery, and his methods unorthodox: certainly, varied malpractice was associated with the great campaign of Guadeloupean commerce raiding which he instigated during the latter part of his regime.<sup>3</sup> When both regime and campaign ended suddenly with his brusque recall to France, there were numerous expressions of relief.<sup>4</sup>

1. Public Record Office, London (hereafter PRO), ADM/1/322, Letter 4, 22 Jan. 1799. Although technically incorrect, the British use of "Director" might well be taken as a comment on the extraordinary status which Hugues had enjoyed at Guadeloupe, a matter which had occasioned recurrent friction between himself and the French government.

2. For discussion of early reaction to this novel and daunting phenomenon, see H. J. K. Jenkins, "Guadeloupe, savagery and emancipation: British comment of 1794-1796," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 65 (1978): 325-331.

3. H. J. K. Jenkins, "The Heyday of French Privateering from Guadeloupe, 1796-98," *The Mariner's Mirror* 64 (1978): 245-250.

4. Nowhere more so than on British-occupied Martinique, an island colony whose seaborne trade had been a particular target for Hugues's raiding. See H. J. K. Jenkins, "Guadeloupe, Martinique and

In due course, however, Guadeloupe's efforts against shipping were to revive once more. Although lacking the near-frenzied intensity which had marked the colony's flotilla in Hugues's day, this renewed commerce raiding was characterized by a generally higher level of irregularity. Kaleidoscopic variations on the theme of malpractice meant that Guadeloupe's flotilla of 1799-1802 became at times a rather nebulous entity.

Around the close of the eighteenth century, the West Indies constituted one of the focal locations for the trading activity of the Atlantic community. Sugar and other colonial commodities caused the Caribbean to loom large in the economic calculations of various governments. In particular, this resulted in the West Indies becoming an arena for remarkable interaction between the interests of Britain, Revolutionary France, and the United States. The study of maritime operations in the eastern Caribbean from 1799 to 1802 certainly demonstrates an important American involvement, including much of the Franco-American Quasi-War. The theater also witnessed a continuation of the longstanding Anglo-French struggle, as well as a continued state of affairs within which France could exercise only limited control over Guadeloupe. In part, this reflected an ongoing process of political upheaval within France itself. But one should also bear in mind the impact of French Revolutionary ideology upon the West Indies as a whole, and the resulting tendency towards a climate of uncertainty within which many of the traditional assumptions regarding Caribbean affairs lost their validity.<sup>5</sup>

During the years immediately following Hugues's removal by the French Government, Guadeloupe's

commerce raiding: two colonies in conflict, 1797-1798," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 78 (1991): 465-475.

5. See, for example, Anne Pérotin-Dumon, "Révolutionnaires français et royalistes espagnols dans les Antilles," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 76 (1989): 125-158. This article appeared in a special double number (282-283) published to mark the two-hundredth anniversary of 1789 and the French Revolution's impact overseas.



commerce raiding<sup>6</sup> slipped into increased disorder, partly because of the colony's internal problems. In addition, the period c. 1799-1800 witnessed determined efforts by the United States government to enforce an embargo on trade with France and her colonies. This in turn led to a situation in which some American merchants and seafarers colluded with the Guadeloupeans, and there is good reason to believe that a number of bogus captures were arranged to conceal commercial transactions which breached official United States policy.<sup>7</sup> This matter raises many problems in connection with the surviving documentation. Whatever its defects and uncertainties, Guadeloupe's commerce raiding was an important consideration in the period 1799-1802, not least by providing a persistent source of difficulty for the British interests in the eastern Caribbean. Moreover, the very disorder in Guadeloupean *guerre de course* during this time meant that it impinged all the more widely and unpredictably upon international relations at large.

The administrative instability at Guadeloupe following Hugues's removal affected every aspect of the colony's activity,<sup>8</sup> and efforts against merchant shipping were no exception. General Desfourneaux, Hugues's immediate successor, began with attempts to concentrate the colony's flotilla in its home anchorages, but a gradual resumption of attacks on commerce followed. Much attention has been given to the rather confused diplomacy which Desfourneaux attempted with regard to the United States. The effective outcome was a communication from Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, transmitted in April 1799, which stated that improved relations would require "absolutely . . . an end to all depredations by French privateers and other French armed vessels belonging or resorting to the ports of Guadalupe [*sic*]."<sup>9</sup> However, it is important to remember that Desfourneaux's position at Guadeloupe

was very insecure. He and his successors were like riders upon an unruly horse: just staying in the saddle was a feat, let alone attempting to direct the steed's behavior with precision.

By the following August, Desfourneaux claimed to have evidence that Guadeloupe's worst enemies were in Paris, and he appeared shaken by recent developments which threatened the complete undermining of his own position. Amidst confusion and uncertainty, local Guadeloupean elements seized and deported the luckless Desfourneaux. Reporting upon his overthrow, he asserted that many in the colony expected an early return by Victor Hugues.<sup>10</sup>

At much the same time, late 1799, the Brumaire Coup in France itself swept away the Directory and brought Bonaparte to power. In due course, his distinctive views on commerce raiding and prize law were to help end the Franco-American Quasi-War by means of the settlement stemming from the Convention of Môtrefontaine. Meanwhile, Guadeloupe came under a new style of administration which operated, rather uncertainly, during 1800 and the first part of 1801. As originally constituted, this Paris-appointed triumvirate comprised the administrators Baco, Jeannet, and Laveaux.<sup>11</sup> Confident messages were sometimes forwarded to France, but in mid-1800 Baco sounded a very different note in confidential correspondence<sup>12</sup> with Bonaparte, claiming that the metropolitan country no longer exercised any really effective power at Guadeloupe.

This same administration took a lively interest in commerce raiding. Among other measures, it brought into service a number of raiders which allegedly operated under its own direct control. But there was a marked lack of clarity in some reports, along with insinuations that various irregularities were actually rooted in other administrations. For example, play was made with an alleged "Arrangement Verbal" which was said to have been established between Desfourneaux and local interests. The administration made efforts to regularize at least some aspects of the colony's *guerre de course* by issuing complicated and cross-referenced regulations at Guadeloupe that theoretically brought matters into line with Bonaparte's general policy. However, there was clearly a gulf between theory and practice: one is left with the impression that the administrative grip on Guadeloupe's commerce raiding

6. It is noteworthy that Hugues had evidently viewed himself as a talented practitioner in maritime operations, a point emphasized in conversation with various prisoners. See, for example, J. Hay, *A Narrative of the Insurrection in the Island of Grenada . . .* (London, 1823), 97.

7. Various breaches of the embargo manifested themselves. In March 1799, for example, Captain John Barry, USN, reported upon certain Americans trading at Guadeloupe. See Dudley W. Knox, ed., *Naval Documents Related to the Quasi-War with France*, 7 vols. (Washington, 1935-38), 2: 473-475. The question of bogus captures is discussed more fully at a later stage in this article, with reference to U.S. Treasury comment (see note 34).

8. For a brief summary, see H. J. K. Jenkins, "Guadeloupe 1799-1803: A Haiti Manqué," *History Today* (April 1980): 13-16. In the period, the question of "San Domingo" (Haiti) attracted much attention to the western Caribbean, just as Guadeloupe did to the eastern part. However, despite some obvious parallels, the circumstances of these two colonies were very different in several important ways.

9. Knox, *Naval Documents* 3: 109.

10. Archives Nationales, Paris (hereafter AN), Colonies C7a 51, folios 66, 67, 71, 72.

11. The composition was to undergo various changes. Laveaux, for example, was replaced because of allegedly stirring up additional unrest.

12. AN, Colonies C7a 52, folios 115 *et seq.*



was both questionable and uncertain.<sup>13</sup>

In May 1801, Admiral Lacrosse took charge at Guadeloupe as Captain-General — a title which reflected Bonaparte's radical changes in colonial affairs. In short order, Lacrosse's decision to style his residence a palace and his pretentious scheme for an art college aroused sharply adverse criticism.<sup>14</sup> More seriously, his implementation of Bonaparte's racist policies, coupled with his own arrogance, made Lacrosse hateful to many Guadeloupeans. Late in 1801 he was overthrown and deported. The British promptly captured the vessel carrying him but quickly released him as news of the Preliminaries of the Peace of Amiens reached the Caribbean. Thus, during the last weeks of 1801 and the opening months of 1802, a longstanding tendency towards disorder and confusion blossomed into a most peculiar and interesting situation with regard to Guadeloupe, its internal affairs, and its external activities.

The flotilla presided over by the various administrations just considered was, understandably enough, the setting for an unusually high level of irregularity. Although most forms of this had been evident in Hugues's day, his successors' inability to achieve firm control seems to have occasioned an upsurge in the scale of various abuses. It would appear that a notable instance involved the creation of pseudo-Guadeloupean raiders, many of them actually Spanish vessels which rarely, if ever, came within sight of Guadeloupe. The sale of privateering licenses to the operators of such craft was a subject upon which the Guadeloupean authorities tended to be less than forthcoming. In early 1801, for example, a long communication<sup>15</sup> was prepared on the subject of anti-shipping operations, clearly intended as a defense against wide-ranging accusations. However, it was obscure and evasive on the ticklish matter of Guadeloupe's "agents Extérieurs" and their distribution of privateering licenses in the Spanish colonies and elsewhere. A further problem reflected the removal of Hugues's autocratic presence, and it involved an apparent blossoming of so-called "picaroon" activity, i.e. forays by very small raiders which had no claim to any authorization at all.

In general, the lion's share of Caribbean commerce raiding in the period of the French Revolutionary Wars involved vessels which were commonly styled "privateers." However, many such vessels did not qualify for that term in its strict sense, a fact which makes several

of the usual methods for examining privateering phenomena inappropriate and unsatisfactory in this particular instance. Some craft referred to as privateers lacked licenses or else carried papers of the most questionable sort; others switched nationality almost at the hoisting of an ensign. At times, moreover, the line between privateers and vessels in the service of colonial regimes became exceedingly indistinct.<sup>16</sup>

Notwithstanding the points just made, there is convincing evidence that genuine Guadeloupean raiders (as distinct from bogus ones) did operate effectively in the period between Hugues's removal and the Peace of Amiens. Indeed, it is clear that vessels of this sort were the mainstay of French commerce raiding in the eastern Caribbean. It is equally clear, though, that the activity of the Guadeloupean flotilla fluctuated markedly from time to time. This was linked with the colony's internal difficulties, and it also reflected matters such as British and American naval countermeasures or the fruits of Franco-American diplomacy. Whatever eclipses it suffered, Guadeloupean effort against shipping was regularly renewed.

Illustrative of this was a report<sup>17</sup> made by Captain Alexander Murray, USN, during February 1800. Commenting on the continuing hazard in Guadeloupean waters, he stressed that the smaller types of raider were "like Hydra's heads & multiply daily." In the following month, a dispatch from the British Leeward Islands Command described the same location as being "covered with the Enemy's small privateers," adding that it was currently proving "impossible to reduce their number materially."<sup>18</sup> It is interesting to note how British and American operations could dovetail into each other at about this time. A typical instance involved HMS *Southampton*'s capture of the *Tendant*, a sloop-rigged Guadeloupean raider of thirty-five tons, which was taken together with a prize which she had in company — the *Prudence*, a brig of New York ownership.<sup>19</sup> Cases where the British recaptured seized American merchantmen, and *vice versa*, were by no means uncommon.

The question of diminutive raiders, raised by Captain Murray, is of particular interest with regard to Guadeloupe's flotilla subsequent to Bonaparte's assumption of power in France. Bonaparte was firmly

13. AN, Colonies C7a53, especially folios 33, 34, 47, 48, 57, 58.

14. Valuable information on Lacrosse's administration is contained in AN, Colonies C7a 55 (unfoliated); see especially "Extrait de la Correspondance du Capitaine Général."

15. AN, Colonies C7a 54, folios 31-36.

16. For discussion of the confused international attitudes which blurred various traditional distinctions, see H. J. K. Jenkins, "Privateers, Picaroons, Pirates: West Indian Commerce Raiders, 1793-1801," *The Mariner's Mirror* 73 (1987): 181-186.

17. Knox, *Naval Documents* 5: 176-177.

18. PRO, ADM/1/323, Letter 13 (first series).

19. See *Southampton's* log account, PRO, ADM/51/1323, 1 Jan. 1800, and ADM/1/323, Letter 18 (first series).



convinced that such small fry were impossible to keep under firm administrative control, and he wished to have them banned. In February 1801, the authorities at Guadeloupe made specific reply to this point, arguing *in favor* of numerous small raiders. They claimed that any substantial reduction in the overall number of Guadeloupean raiders would ease “les inquiétudes de l’Ennemi,” perhaps occasioning serious problems for Guadeloupe itself, described as “L’unique point” of resistance to the British in that part of the world. It may well be significant that this same communication made reference to the earlier successes of the “flibustiers,” i.e., buccaneers.<sup>20</sup> Apart from the parallel which could be drawn regarding attacks on shipping by those old-time marauders, there was an obvious comparison between the lawlessness associated with buccaneering and the increasingly serious turbulence within the Guadeloupean community just prior to the Peace of Amiens.

The present writer has discussed elsewhere the paucity of the surviving documentation for some aspects of Guadeloupe’s flotilla in the French Revolutionary Wars. To some extent, this is due to irregularities in the period itself and the reluctance of those involved to set down facts that might later prove embarrassing. In part, also, the problem reflects the subsequent destruction of many documents in various misfortunes. Regarding Hugues’s great campaign of commerce raiding, British records dealing with scores of captured raiders can often provide insights into the Guadeloupean flotilla which are otherwise unobtainable.<sup>21</sup> Similar remarks apply to the period under discussion here, although in this instance there should also be reference, of course, to American records relevant to numerous captured raiders.

Illustrative of American naval successes, the *Enterprize* took the *Flambeau* in Guadeloupean waters during July 1800, and this prize represented the more substantial vessels in the colony’s flotilla.<sup>22</sup> A comparable raider was the schooner-rigged *Perséverance*, captured by the British Leeward Islands Command at much the same time. She was given this appraisal: “. . . does not appear to be 12 Months old, American built, the Bottom fastened with treenails and Nails — is pierced for 16 Guns.” Her dimensions were stated thus: tonnage 133 tons; length on deck 79 feet; beam 20 feet 8 inches; draught 11 feet.<sup>23</sup> The *Perséverance* may well

have been an American freighter captured by the Guadeloupeans, renamed and adapted for raiding purposes.

Most Guadeloupean raiders were evidently a good deal smaller. Examples taken by the British c. 1800 included the *Furet* (a 72-ton schooner mounting four carriage guns), and the *Quatre Amis* (a 25-ton schooner mounting two carriage guns). Some members of the flotilla were of even smaller size, such as the *Hiron-delle*, a 10-tonner with an armament of swivel pieces.<sup>24</sup> It is understandable that small vessels of this sort could be propelled easily enough by oar power, a technique to which they commonly resorted. In fact, the tactics of Guadeloupe’s raiders were sometimes more reminiscent of galley warfare than of fighting sail’s heyday.<sup>25</sup>

Examples of the application of oar power to Guadeloupe’s *guerre de course* were found in the flotilla’s “rowboat privateers.” Captures of such craft figured from time to time in naval correspondence of the period. These open boats usually carried between a dozen and twenty men apiece, and small arms were often supplemented by a swivel gun or a light-calibre carronade mounted on a slide in the bow. At first sight, it might seem that so meagre a raider would have had a seriously limited capability, but this would be to overlook the small size and low freeboard of many freighters operating in the Caribbean. Well handled, a rowboat privateer could snap up suitable prizes without too much difficulty. Granted the climatic conditions, exposure was not an immediate problem for crewmen; thus, rowboats were by no means limited to brief coastal excursions, and a lug-rig was commonly fitted for passage-making purposes.

There were some notable raider-captains associated with Guadeloupe’s flotilla in the period 1799-1802, and it is useful to cite a few at this stage, together with some comment on the vessels which they commanded during the final stage of the Quasi-War. Three such raiders were Captain Mounier of the *Alliance* (fitted-out by the armateur Mey), Captain Ragoudin of the *Général Dugommier* (fitted-out by the armateur Tholozan), and Captain Maindebourg of the *Patriote* (fitted-out by Aznour Souffrin et Cie).<sup>26</sup>

Consideration of Guadeloupe’s commerce raiders, 1799-1802, leads on to the relevant prize court proceedings. Unfortunately, there are often serious

20. AN, Colonies C7a 54, folio 36.

21. Jenkins, “Guadeloupe, Martinique and commerce raiding,” 470.

22. Apart from more formal records, the *Flambeau* received considerable attention in the American press. See, for example, a New York news item included in Knox, *Naval Documents* 6: 213.

23. PRO, ADM/1/323 Letters 22 and 23 (first series) and appended material.

24. Ibid., Letter 18 (first series) and appended material.

25. Jenkins, “Guadeloupe, Martinique and commerce raiding,” 469.

26. These three captains are from a more extensive listing in H. J. K. Jenkins, “Privateering from Guadeloupe 1794-1802” (unpublished typescript, 1986, National Maritime Museum, London, MS 86/092), pp. 72-73.



problems of documentation for Caribbean prizes taken in those years by raiders under French colors. The level of abuse and malpractice in proceedings at Guadeloupe and some other colonies was such that it seems unlikely that any thorough, frank, and genuinely accurate record of such proceedings ever existed. In the case of Guadeloupe's documentation, moreover, invasion, internal disorder, and natural disaster have all combined, in the intervening years, to destroy a good deal of what was set down on paper.<sup>27</sup> Another noteworthy point is that, in Hugues's day, a number of prizes conducted to Guadeloupe were evidently disposed of without any prize-court proceedings at all,<sup>28</sup> and it seems probable that instances of this sort became more common after his departure from the colony.

A measure of uncertainty and disorder affected the whole question of prize law in the decade leading up to the Peace of Amiens. Both Britain and France came to view prize procedure more as a weapon than as the product of formal deliberation. With Guadeloupe moving towards virtually independent policies, the colony sometimes produced legal measures which outraged not only enemies and neutrals but the French government itself.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the general severity of France's prize courts (both metropolitan and colonial) towards neutrals led to temporary changes in some British procedures during the French Revolutionary Wars, a matter which a leading treatise was later to describe as reflecting very unusual circumstances.<sup>30</sup>

Extreme attitudes on the part of the French were to some extent a reaction against widespread abuses involving flags of convenience. In the eastern Caribbean, the neutral Scandinavian colonies played a notable role in this matter. In 1797, for instance, Victor Hugues claimed that at St. Thomas a British merchantman could be turned into a so-called Danish one for a fee of just "six piastres."<sup>31</sup> Changing circumstances were to lead to many American freighters following the same proce-

cedure, and it seems to have become quite common for the Guadeloupean prize court to ignore such easily purchased changes. Thus, various difficulties arise because a considerable number of vessels specified in the court records as being American were, technically at least, of some different nationality.<sup>32</sup>

Closely linked with such matters were the efforts of the United States government, during the Quasi-War, to impose an effective embargo which would prevent Americans from trading with France or its colonies. It is a striking fact that British diplomatic opinion viewed the American embargo as "not less important" than the "vigorous measure . . . authorizing American vessels of war to capture French cruizers."<sup>33</sup> But within the confusion of the period, some American interests resented governmental moves of the sort mentioned, notwithstanding the general circumstances of the Quasi-War. Thus, with the specific intention of circumventing regulations, a number of American freighters took to operating under flags of convenience c. 1799-1800. Further, as already noted, there was sometimes American collusion with such colonies as Guadeloupe in the form of bogus captures which masked what was actually commerce conducted in breach of official U.S. policy.

In this matter, the United States government was encountering a problem which had long bedevilled almost every other power with a substantial presence or interest in the West Indies. Smuggling was endemic, and the line between that and collusion with an enemy was often very blurred in the minds of traders and seafarers. The naval and colonial authorities of Britain, France, and Spain had all complained of their own merchants on many occasions. Arguably, there was an inherent dynamism to the trade patterns of the West Indies which could make national policies and governmental restrictions seem curiously irrelevant in a setting of salt water and eager markets. Such thinking was perhaps fostered, for some Americans, by the very circumstances of the Quasi-War, with the U.S. viewing itself more as an outraged neutral than as a definite combatant.

For its part, the U.S. Treasury was to charge that some American vessels had been deliberately steered close to commerce-raiding bases and had then been taken "in consequence of pre-concerted arrangements." Although many captures of American vessels were genuine ones, the Treasury insisted that it could "unquestionably" establish that various other seizures were "fraudulent." It further asserted that, in many cases, the papers furnished by American shipmasters did

27. Similar remarks apply to other French colonies as well. One should particularly mention the destruction in France itself during 1871 of much evidence related to appeals against various colonial decisions.

28. For discussion of an instance involving obvious malpractice by the Guadeloupean authorities and their Swedish counterparts at St. Bartholomews, see H. J. K. Jenkins, "The Case of the *Courier*, 1794-98," *The Mariner's Mirror* 76 (1990): 69-73.

29. An outstanding example was the Guadeloupean Decree of 13 Pluviôse Year V. See H. J. K. Jenkins, "Controversial legislation at Guadeloupe regarding trade and piracy, 1797," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 76 (1989): 97-106. This article was included in the special commemorative number mentioned in note 5.

30. W. Shee, ed., *Abbot's Law of Merchant Ships and Seamen* (London, 1847), 593. This eighth edition is the standard edition of the work.

31. AN, Colonies C7a 49, folios 198-199.

32. This point is discussed, with particular reference to prizes taken by Captain Honoré Andrieu, in Jenkins, "Privateering from Guadeloupe 1794-1802," 47.

33. PRO, FO/5/22, Liston to Grenville, 2 June 1798.



not allow of effective distinction between real capture and collusion.<sup>34</sup> Overall, it is plain that there must be considerable caution when approaching what has survived of Guadeloupe's prize court records for the particular years indicated.

Responding to urgent enquiries from the French government at the time of the Convention of Môtrefontaine, the authorities at Guadeloupe produced a series of statements regarding prizes said to have been sold at the colony from September 1799 to December 1800. These documents show signs of hasty preparation, including confusion on the subject of some important dates. According to this material, just over three hundred vessels of various nationalities were disposed of in the stated period.<sup>35</sup> However, a proportion of these "prizes" would actually have involved collusion between mercantile interests and the Guadeloupeans. In addition, some captured vessels had probably never received attention from the prize court at all, and hence were not included in the listings.

Another Guadeloupean document listed certain American merchantmen which had been considered by the colony's prize court during the "Epoque de la Signature de la Convention."<sup>36</sup> The document referred to some fifty vessels said to have been condemned in the period from October to December 1800, and it mentioned some very questionable procedures, including the removal of goods at sea in a manner suggesting lawless pillaging that was later given cosmetic treatment at Guadeloupe. To cite another type of abuse, a brig named *Eliza* was condemned despite a statement that the relevant papers had been lost in a boat capsize: the admitted absence of this evidence was seemingly no impediment to the court. It is noteworthy that the *Eliza* had been conducted to the Spanish possession of Margarita, the documentation being forwarded from there to Guadeloupe. Indeed, less than half of the seized American vessels mentioned had been taken to ports where the French flag flew.

Although the Convention of Môtrefontaine brought an end to the Quasi-War, the Guadeloupeans still faced continuing conflict with the British for a while. It is noticeable, though, that the remaining hostilities of 1801 tended to lose momentum as the various authorities in the Caribbean became increasingly aware of European moves towards a general peace. The very likelihood of this may even have helped to exacerbate the uncertainties and misgivings felt within Guadeloupe's commu-

nity. Towards the end of 1801, news of the Peace of Amiens reached the Caribbean; however, as previously noted, the colony's Captain-General had already been deported and subsequently captured by the British. News of the peace led swiftly to his release and, thereafter, two rival Guadeloupean administrations faced each other. A ramshackle Provisional Council operated within the colony, and a sort of émigré administration was set up on the nearby British possession of Dominica. The situation was an extremely confused and perplexing one. As a result, Admiral Duckworth, then directing the British Leeward Islands Command, found it took some time to put an effective end to commerce raiding from Guadeloupe. The process had to include a stern warning that any further interference with shipping would result in those responsible being "proceeded against as Pirates."<sup>37</sup>

As a closing comment on this stage, mention should be made of a document entitled "Etat des Prises faites postérieurement à la Signature des Préliminaires de Paix," which was prepared at Guadeloupe during February 1802. A copy of this statement<sup>38</sup> reached Paris, evidently via Admiral Lacrosse's establishment at Dominica, and it carried a note to the effect that it included proceedings conducted under what was termed "le Gouvernmt usurpateur." This description of the Provisional Council as a usurper should not veil the fact that it actually asserted its full loyalty to the French government — yet another instance of the confused state of affairs at Guadeloupe in this period. Nine prizes were listed, all of which were shown as having been condemned by Guadeloupe's prize court between November 1801 and January 1802. Two of the vessels had actually been taken to Puerto Rico by their captors. All nine appear to have been British, and when the original listing was drawn up at Guadeloupe, it conceded that at least two cases would require restitution.

During the short-lived Peace of Amiens, Guadeloupe was firmly reintegrated into the French colonial structure. The process meant a return to a system of colonial administration reminiscent of the Ancien Régime, complete with the restoration of slavery. A substantial number of black troops, survivors of the forces which Hugues had created, were deported.<sup>39</sup>

The present article is essentially a study of Revolutionary Guadeloupe's commerce raiding in the particularly troubled years between Hugues's departure

34. Knox, *Naval Documents* 5: 122-124.

35. AN, Colonies C7a 53, folios 51-56.

36. This "Tableau des Bâtiments Américains condamnés . . ." was certified during January 1801 and is included in AN, Marine FF2 43 Dossier J (Guadeloupe).

37. PRO, ADM/1/323, Letter 111 (second series).

38. AN, Marine FF2 43 Dossier J (Guadeloupe).

39. Such changes contributed to Guadeloupe's rather different performance when Anglo-French hostilities were renewed in 1803. See H. J. K. Jenkins, "French Privateering from Martinique and Guadeloupe, 1803-10," *The Mariner's Mirror* 74 (1988): 287-289.



and the cessation of general hostilities. British and American naval countermeasures have received only tangential treatment in this instance. Similarly, such intriguing matters as the Guadeloupean raid upon Curaçao in 1800 have no real place here — although it might be said that this raid, against an island belonging to France's Dutch allies, was symptomatic of Guadeloupe's extraordinary condition at that time. A British military dispatch informed London that the early reports of the Curaçao raid had been discounted, because the whole affair seemed "so highly improbable."<sup>40</sup>

Despite uncertainty as to many details, there is considerable evidence that Guadeloupe's commerce raiders — most of them small, and generally styled privateers despite possible objection to that term in some cases — played a remarkable role during the period. However, it was a role which defies precise quantification in the present day. The lack of many papers related to the issue of privateering licenses by the various Guadeloupean administrations contributes to this state of affairs, as does the sometimes questionable and fragmentary nature of the surviving documentation regarding prizes and their disposal. Moreover, especially in its more disordered phases, the Guadeloupean community evidently sent to sea a number of raiders which operated without any documentation at all. The West Indies were in turmoil, and this accentuated the traditional tendency towards widespread irregularity in Caribbean *guerre de course*. Thus, there is sometimes difficulty in interpreting the evidence from naval captures: it is not always clear, for example, to what colony some particular raider can be properly attributed.

If precise information is sometimes lacking for Guadeloupe's flotilla between 1799 and 1802, then at least a number of cardinal images emerge from the evidence which is available. Regarding background, there is the image of longstanding Anglo-French rivalry in the colonial sphere, sharpened by the effects of upheaval in the wake of "The Principles of 1789." Equally, there is the image of the United States as a young giant — independence dated back a mere quarter-century or so — flexing its political, commercial, and naval muscle in the furtherance of what were still experimental policies. Such was the setting when, during mid-1799, the U.S. secretary of state informed the Guadeloupeans of his conviction that their commerce raiding could be made to pay only if it involved unjust seizures of neutrals: "So long therefore as the French Government and its agents allow of privateering, particularly in the West Indies, so long we must presume, whatever professions are made, that they mean

to make a prey of neutral commerce."<sup>41</sup>

While financial gain was certainly an important motive within Guadeloupean commerce raiding, it is possible that the secretary of state had overemphasized its significance. There were other influences at work. The period 1799-1802 was a very peculiar one in several ways and, so far as Guadeloupe and its raiders were concerned, much of this stemmed from the complicated legacy which Victor Hugues had left behind him in the colony, a legacy which continued to have powerful effect. Under his rule, Revolutionary Guadeloupe had become what a senior French officer was later to describe as a "colonie guerrière,"<sup>42</sup> i.e., an entity with the qualities of a warrior-state as well as those of a colony in the ordinary sense. Within another perspective, Revolutionary Guadeloupe might well be viewed as resembling the Algiers or Tunis of its day, a corsair state transposed to a Caribbean setting. Whatever the serious and undeniable abuses that were associated with its various administrations, Guadeloupe tended to perceive itself as an isolated and embattled fragment of territory in the midst of a most threatening environment. Thus, French Revolutionary ideology and sheer anxiety played their part in the colony's commerce raiding. It was within this context that American shipping, and that of other neutrals, tended to receive harsh treatment on many occasions.

Though Hugues's legacy was potent, the lack of his actual presence contributed to Guadeloupe's progress along an increasingly troubled path. His successors were unable to control his formidable creation, and so the colony exhibited internal disorder and alarming instability. The consequences were exacerbated by upheaval within the metropolitan country: although Bonaparte's seizure of power paved the way for a Franco-American settlement, it also led to changes in French colonial policy which proved most serious for Guadeloupe. Even so, the colony continued to exploit its tradition and geographical location so as to impinge, at times dramatically, upon seagoing commerce.

41. Knox, *Naval Documents* 3: 282-283.

42. E.-E. Boyer-Peyreleau, *Les Antilles françaises* . . . , 3 vols. (Paris, 1823), 3: 172.

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40. PRO, WO/1/90, Trigge to Dundas, 26 Oct. 1800.



# The Curse of the *Dolphin*

WILLIAM THIESEN

. . . a newspaper is not a rubber band, to be stretched indefinitely to include less or more; and there are other demands upon us than those growing out of the *Dolphin* controversy, which has become national as well as nautical.

It is a controversy which would result in great good to the Navy if it could be kept within professional limits, but there is danger that we may be compelled to change the classification in our list of naval vessels in commission, from first and second, third and fourth rates into democratic and republican ships, each of which will have its champion and its critics.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1883, the U.S. Navy's newest building program was making unusual progress.<sup>2</sup> The *Dolphin*, focus of this "national controversy," was the lead ship of the ABCD program, so designated for the vessels *Atlanta*, *Boston*, *Chicago*, and *Dolphin*. Harbingers of naval progress, these ships were the first American warships to incorporate steel construction and steam as the primary means of propulsion. Profoundly influencing the naval establishment, they were also objects of enormous contention that pitted not only Democrat against Republican but Congress against the executive, the press against contractor, bureau against advisory board, and line officer against engineer. The first to go to sea trials, the diminutive *Dolphin* brought about the financial failure of America's largest shipbuilder, stigmatized two able navy secretaries, and may even have destroyed the presidential aspirations of two prominent politicians.<sup>3</sup>

While contemporaries, and most historians, have portrayed the *Dolphin* debacle as little more than an intensified version of the usual political struggles over naval policy, budgets, and issues of technical competence, the factor that so highly charged the debate was the rapid technological change embodied in the design of the *Dolphin*. With the transition from wooden shipbuilding techniques to steel construction methods

came the need to be on the politically correct side of naval development. Unfortunately, in the quantum leap from wood and canvas to steel and steam, the towering ambitions of American naval planners' were matched only by the heights of their ignorance. As a result, the desire of certain individuals and groups within political circles to capitalize politically on the *Dolphin* blinded them to her experimental value.

On 6 July 1882, the House passed the Naval Appropriations Act that set aside surplus cash to build two steel cruisers and established the second Naval Advisory Board to oversee their construction. By this time, domestic warship design had become a popular cause for chauvinistic American naval planners. As policy makers in the House and Senate steered the bill through Congress, Naval Affairs Committee Chairman Benjamin W. Harris tried to allay Democratic suspicions of corruption by preventing a direct remunerative relationship between the navy secretary and private contractors.<sup>4</sup> The Democrats mistrusted Navy Secretary William E. Chandler, because of his supposed fraud in the 1876 presidential campaign and fresh memories of former Republican Navy Secretary George M. Robeson's financial abuses. Therefore, Democratic Representatives Washington C. Whitthorne and Abram Hewitt amended the construction bill to insure that the new board oversaw construction, set the maximum acceptable cost for each ship, and validated all bills before the secretary paid them. As Chairman Harris noted in a report to the House:

1. "The Dolphin Again," *United States Army and Navy Journal and Gazette of the Regular and Volunteer Forces* 23, no. 1146 (8 August 1885): 30.

2. *Army and Navy Journal* 21, no. 1013 (18 August 1883): 53.

3. Mark D. Hirsch, *William C. Whitney: Modern Warwick* (New York: Dodd, Meade and Company, 1948); Leon Burr Richardson, *William E. Chandler: Republican* (New York: Dodd, Meade and Company, 1940).

4. *Congressional Record* (hereafter *Cong. Rec.*), 47 Cong., 1st sess., 5569.

The sole object in creating this board is to throw around this civilian Secretary of the Navy safeguards which may protect him from errors and mistakes which he, from want of technical and professional knowledge, may fall into, and from the mistakes or dangers of others. It will, moreover, fix responsibilities.<sup>5</sup>

The bill passed by a narrow margin with the support of all 112 Republicans but only 7 out of 83 Democrats; 95 congressmen abstained.<sup>6</sup> Senator Eugene Hale navigated the bill through the Senate, altering the board's name from the original "Naval Board of Advice and Survey" to the Naval Advisory Board and proclaiming that the secretary "cannot move in the direction of spending one dollar, or of deciding a plan to spend one dollar, or of deciding that he will decide a plan upon which he shall spend one dollar, until the naval advisory board has considered it and approved it."<sup>7</sup>

With Senate passage of the bill on 31 July 1882 and final enactment on 5 August, Secretary Chandler began appointing members to the board. To avoid the problems of the first Naval Advisory Board and streamline the decision-making process, Chandler appointed fewer members. Though little evidence of corruption ever surfaced from his administration, Chandler was known for his ability to employ patronage, and his choice of Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt to chair the new Naval Advisory Board proved no exception. Shufeldt had a background in worldwide diplomatic missions but little experience in warship construction. While a member of a Korean diplomatic mission, Shufeldt had written a private letter that contained derogatory racial statements about the Chinese. Former Republican Senator and Naval Affairs Committee Chairman Aaron A. Sargent of California, had released the letter to a San Francisco newspaper. The disclosure proved to be embarrassing for the navy and resulted in Shufeldt's recall from Korea. Because of his culpability in the scandal, Sargent interceded with Chandler on Shufeldt's behalf, prompting Chandler to offer Shufeldt the position of chairman. With only his diplomatic skills to recommend him, Shufeldt reluctantly accepted the position.<sup>8</sup>

5. "Construction of Vessels of War for the Navy," 47 Cong., 1st sess., 1882, H. Rept. 653, xxviii.

6. Ibid., 5458-68, 5659-5662, 5691-5698; United States Statutes at Large, vol. 22, 291-292; Richardson, William E. Chandler, 289-290.

7. "Construction of Vessels of War for the Navy," 6631.

8. Donal James Sexton, "Forging the Sword: Congress and the American Naval Renaissance, 1880-1890" (Ph.D. diss., University of Tennessee, 1976), 83-85; Leonard Alexander Swann, Jr., *John Roach* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1965), 171-172.

Ironically, inexperience with warship design characterized most members of the second Naval Advisory Board, whose sole purpose was to design America's first modern warships. Of the five naval personnel assigned to the board, only Lieutenant Edward Very had served on the previous Naval Advisory Board of 1881. Assistant Naval Constructor Francis T. Bowles had studied naval design at the Royal Naval College in England, but he lacked practical experience with ship construction. None of the naval personnel on the board could boast of distinguished careers in naval architecture or marine engineering. The construction of vessels by the navy had been predominantly of wood until the early 1880s, with the exception of three iron gunboats of the *Alert* class built between 1874 and 1876.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, most navy engineers had some experience with iron, but little if any with steel.

Shufeldt recommended Henry Steers and Herman Winter to sit as the board's civilian experts. Shipbuilders Charles Cramp and John Roach classified Winter as a second-rate engineer, so Shufeldt dropped Winter and changed the recommendation to Steers and Miers Coryell — a substitution that returned to haunt the board later. The addition of Steers, a naval architect, and Coryell, a marine engineer, brought much-needed design and engineering experience to the board, but neither man had any expertise in warship design.<sup>10</sup>

A variety of critics put added stress on the board. It had to prove itself to men such as Commander William C. Wise, who felt it "did not represent the best talent and patriotism of the Navy," and Abram Hewitt, who claimed that the board lacked the expertise to produce a true fighting ship.<sup>11</sup>

The complexity of planning increased as the number of experts consulted grew. In order to increase support for the warships, Chandler submitted unfinished plans to twenty-three shipbuilders and his own bureau chiefs. The shipbuilders did not reply, claiming the navy had warship design skills superior to their own.<sup>12</sup>

9. Frank M. Bennett, *The Steam Navy of the United States: A History of the Growth of the Steam Vessel of War in the U.S. Navy, and of the Naval Engineer Corps* (Pittsburgh, PA: W. T. Nicholson, 1896), appendix B.

10. Walter I. Brandt, "Steel and the New Navy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1920), 18-19; Charles Oscar Paullin, *Paullin's History of Naval Administration, 1775-1911* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1968), 392-393; William Scott Peterson, "The Navy in the Doldrums: The Influence of Politics and Technology on the Decline and Rejuvenation of the American Fleet, 1866-1886" (Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, 1986), 192-193; Sexton, "Forging the Sword," 82-83; Swann, *John Roach*, 171-173.

11. Sexton, "Forging the Sword," 84.

12. *Report of the Secretary of the Navy*, 1883, 48 Cong., 1st sess., H. Ex. Doc. 1, part 3, p. 52.



Products of an earlier era, bureau chiefs such as Chief Constructor Theodore D. Wilson argued against innovation, voicing support for more conservative, antiquated designs. Chandler had played into the hands of the bureaus, which he had hoped to circumvent through the Naval Advisory Board. Wilson and the bureaus slowed the board's progress through criticism, bickering, and delaying tactics. In so doing they diminished the supervisory power of the board.<sup>13</sup>

Despite Wilson's objections, the board pursued its original design plans. Had the *Dolphin* incorporated Wilson's recommendations, her speed, seaworthiness, and overall fighting efficiency would have suffered. An increase to full sail rig, for example, would have decreased much-needed space available on board the vessel and added to the ship's instability. A forecastle and poop would have lessened the range of motion of the guns, whereas retaining the bilge keels proved successful in stabilizing the ship as a gun platform. Wood and copper sheathing would have diminished the speed and efficiency necessary in a "dispatch vessel" because the vessel's displacement would have been enlarged by the wooden planking and copper sheets.

Chandler pushed the pace of planning, eager to produce results before the 1884 presidential campaign.<sup>14</sup> On the last day of April 1883, after five months of work, he judged the specifications for the ABCD ships to be far enough along to advertise for public bids in five major newspapers in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. Maximum prices for the ships and the bid-opening date of 2 July were included in the published announcements, but the blueprints on file for examination remained incomplete on the final day. The *Dolphin*'s hull design was finally approved one hour before bid-opening, while plans for the rest of the vessels remained incomplete until early 1884. Charles Cramp of the Cramp Shipyard and J. Taylor Gause of Harlan and Hollingsworth requested a postponement of the bidding until the plans could be completed. In dire need of results to bolster Republican campaign prospects, however, and encouraged by Roach to stick with his accelerated schedule, Chandler pressed on.<sup>15</sup>

Claims of collusion were levelled almost immediately at Chandler after all four of the ABCD contracts were awarded to Chandler's longtime friend John Roach. As the original bids indicate, however, Chandler followed standard government procedure by awarding the contracts to the lowest bidder (see table 1 on page 28). Charges of corruption stemmed mostly from unsuccessful bidders and suspicious Democrats, but they never went beyond innuendo nor prompted an investigation.<sup>16</sup> In fact, J. Taylor Gause, an unsuccessful ABCD bidder and president of the Harlan and Hollingsworth Company, wrote to Chandler in July 1883 stating:

Your whole course in asking for bids, and opening the same, was most fair & honorable, and I do not see how you could have done differently from what you did, and certainly there was not a bidder who had cause to object to your action, or complain of Mr. Roach because he determined to bid very low.<sup>17</sup>

Those who claimed collusion between Roach and Chandler argued that Roach had bid the lowest so that he could charge back future profits from "extras." The representative from Harlan and Hollingsworth doubted this charge.<sup>18</sup> After the bidding, Roach scrawled a letter to Chandler:

I Pledge my Selfe to you that the work shall be equal to the Best in the world of its class. I also Pledge my Selfe to you that every precaution in my Power to see that there is no Extra Bills.<sup>19</sup>

Records show that the total cost for design changes on the *Dolphin*, which were normally undertaken at the request of the Naval Advisory Board, to be \$25,897.68. Even when the design changes are totaled with the contract price of the vessel, Roach still saved the public almost \$35,000 over the next lowest bidder and \$60,000 over the maximum cost estimated by the Naval Advisory Board.<sup>20</sup>

Doldrums," 204, 206-207; Swann, *John Roach*, 177-178.

16. New York *Sun*, 26 July 1883 (transcribed from Baltimore *American* articles of 17 July); Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 295-296.

17. Gause to Chandler, 19 July 1883, Chandler Papers, LC.

18. David B. Tyler, *The American Clyde: A History of Iron and Steel Shipbuilding on the Delaware from 1840 to World War I* (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1958), 56.

19. Roach to Chandler, 5 July 1883, Chandler Papers, LC.

20. "Extra Bills on the Cruisers," Letters Sent by the Naval Advisory Board, vol. 7, Record Group 80, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter RG 80, NA); New York *Times*, 30 April and 8 June 1883.

13. Peterson, "The Navy in the Doldrums," 203; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 297-298; Swann, *John Roach*, 176-177.

14. George F. Howe, *Chester A. Arthur: A Quarter-Century of Machine Politics* (New York: Frederic Ungar, 1935), 239; Peterson, "Navy in the Doldrums," 202; Thomas C. Reeves, *Gentleman Boss: The Life of Chester Alan Arthur* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975), 342-343.

15. Roach to Chandler, 15 June 1883, Chandler Papers, Library of Congress (hereafter LC); New York *Times*, 30 April 1883; Benjamin F. Cooling, *Gray Steel and Blue Water Navy: The Formative Years of America's Military-Industrial Complex, 1881-1917* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1979), 37-39; Peterson, "Navy in the

Table 1  
Bidders for the ABCD Ships

Bidder	Location	Atlanta	Boston	Chicago	Dolphin
Allen & Blaisdell	St. Louis				380,000
William Cramp & Sons	Philadelphia	650,000	650,000	1,080,000	375,000
Delameter Iron Works	New York			1,163,000	
Harlan & Hollingsworth	Wilmington	775,000	777,000	1,120,000	
Harrison Loring	Boston		748,000		
Quintard Iron Works	New York	763,400			
H.A. Ramsay & Co.	Baltimore				420,000
John Roach	Chester, PA	617,000	619,000	889,000	315,000

Roach did not submit the lowest bid for the ABCDs because of collusion with Chandler. He had other reasons. First, Roach felt secure in maintaining a low profit margin because, unlike other shipbuilders, he had an integrated facility capable of building a steel ship from raw materials to finished product. Roach thereby saved the government the cost of an additional steel contractor. Second, Roach had been intimidated by the threat of lower bids from a man named Henry H. Gorringer. Being the "forceful man" that he was, Chandler inspired both loyalty and opposition in the naval ranks. Many of the naval aristocracy, such as Alfred Thayer Mahan and Bradley Fiske, believed that the "right about" of negligent postwar naval policy began with Chandler.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, officers such as Lieutenant Commander Gorringer believed that Chandler had brought the navy into disrepute.

An engineering officer, Gorringer won public acclaim for acquiring from Egypt the obelisk in Central Park, which he delivered to New York in 1880. Outspoken by nature, Gorringer frequently criticized the first Naval Advisory Board. In the *North American Review*, he claimed that the naval bureaus were:

. . . subject to the log-rolling, wire-pulling, time-serving influences of civil and naval politicians of the worst type, who hang about the department and Congress and persistently seek their own advancement, or thrust themselves by force of cheek into positions they are not competent to occupy and do not deserve.<sup>22</sup>

21. Alfred Thayer Mahan, *From Sail to Steam: Recollections of Naval Life* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1907), 268; Bradley A. Fiske, *From Midshipman to Rear Admiral* (New York: Century Company, 1919), 81.

22. Henry H. Gorringer, "The Navy," *North American Review* 34, no. 306 (May 1882): 493.

Chandler became justifiably perturbed by these accusations and reprimanded Gorringer. Later, when the *New York Post* published an interview in which Gorringer advocated "free ships," Chandler could contain himself no longer. A staunch supporter of ship subsidies, Chandler accused Gorringer of being in British pay, prompting Gorringer to resign and provoking the Democratic press against Chandler.<sup>23</sup>

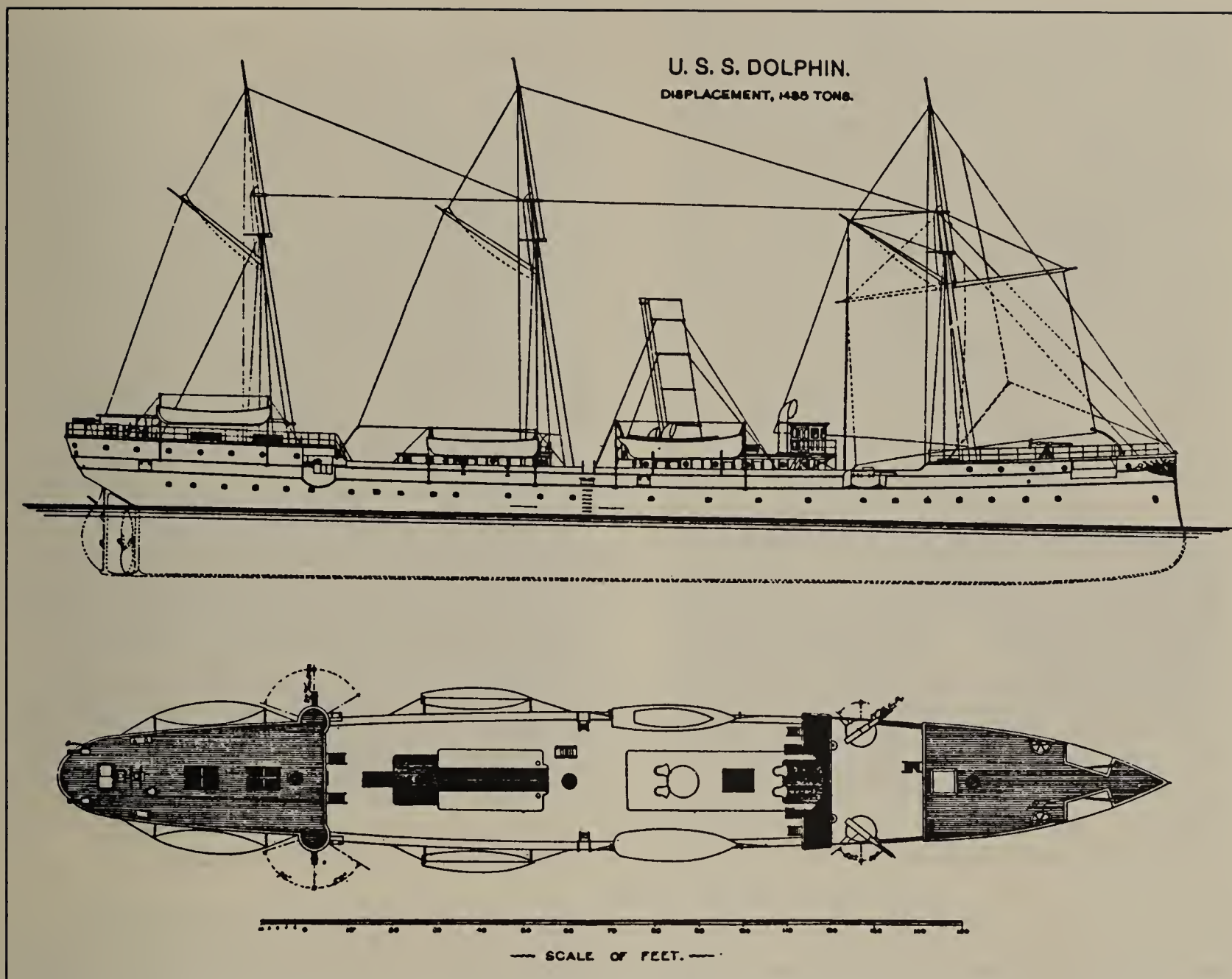
Chandler's sworn enemy and friend to his successor, Navy Secretary William C. Whitney, Gorringer subsequently formed the American Shipbuilding Company on 5 March 1883. Borrowing money from the Vanderbilts to buy the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company's Port Richmond shipyard in Philadelphia, Gorringer acquired two orders from former Roach clients and claimed he would increase production to 80,000 tons per year. He enticed skilled workers away from Roach's yard and boasted of quadrupling his work force in time for the ABCD contracts. Next, Gorringer spread rumors that he would bid recklessly low to insure getting the contracts. To prevent further labor defection and guarantee the award of the ABCD contracts, Roach bid even lower than he might otherwise have done. As it turned out, Gorringer never submitted a bid, and his shipbuilding enterprise went bankrupt.<sup>24</sup>

After the construction process began, the Naval Advisory Board continued to make changes to the *Dolphin's* design. Some alterations changed the ship's basic design, while others corrected admitted mistakes

23. Hirsch, *William C. Whitney*, 260-261; Reeves, *Gentleman Boss*, 347-348; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 317.

24. George M. Robeson to Chandler, 1 July 1883, Chandler Papers, LC; *New York Herald*, 9 May 1883; Gorringer to Whitney, 6 March 1885, William C. Whitney Papers, Library of Congress (hereafter LC); *New York Times*, 6 and 17 March 1883; Swann, *John Roach*, 182; Tyler, *The American Clyde*, 59.





Overview of the USS *Dolphin*, from the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers *Transactions* 1 (1893), plate 26.

in planning. Roach suggested many of the alterations himself.<sup>25</sup> There were sixty-four changes ordered to hull and machinery, amounting to \$18,466.76 in added costs. Almost half required ripping out finished work, further stalling production. These alterations included changing the steam steering gear, raising the deckhouses, shifting the location of the gun towers, adding extra braces and stanchions, and improving the forced draft system.<sup>26</sup>

The most controversial design change involved the replacement of a defective steel propeller shaft with one made of iron. This reversal provided tremendous fodder for the critical Democratic press. Roach had believed that the Nashua Steel and Iron Works of New Hampshire provided the highest quality steel forgings in the United States, even though the technology for large

forgings such as propeller shafts was still in its infancy. Convinced of the steelmaker's ability to supply superior forgings, the Naval Advisory Board initially neglected to assign a permanent naval inspector to the plant. The iron works delivered a defective shaft, which remained in Roach's yard for nearly three months, easily accessible to shipyard naval inspectors. Since Chief Engineer B.B.H. Wharton rated the shaft as "excellent" at the Morgan Iron Works prior to delivery, Roach assumed that the shaft met contract specifications.<sup>27</sup>

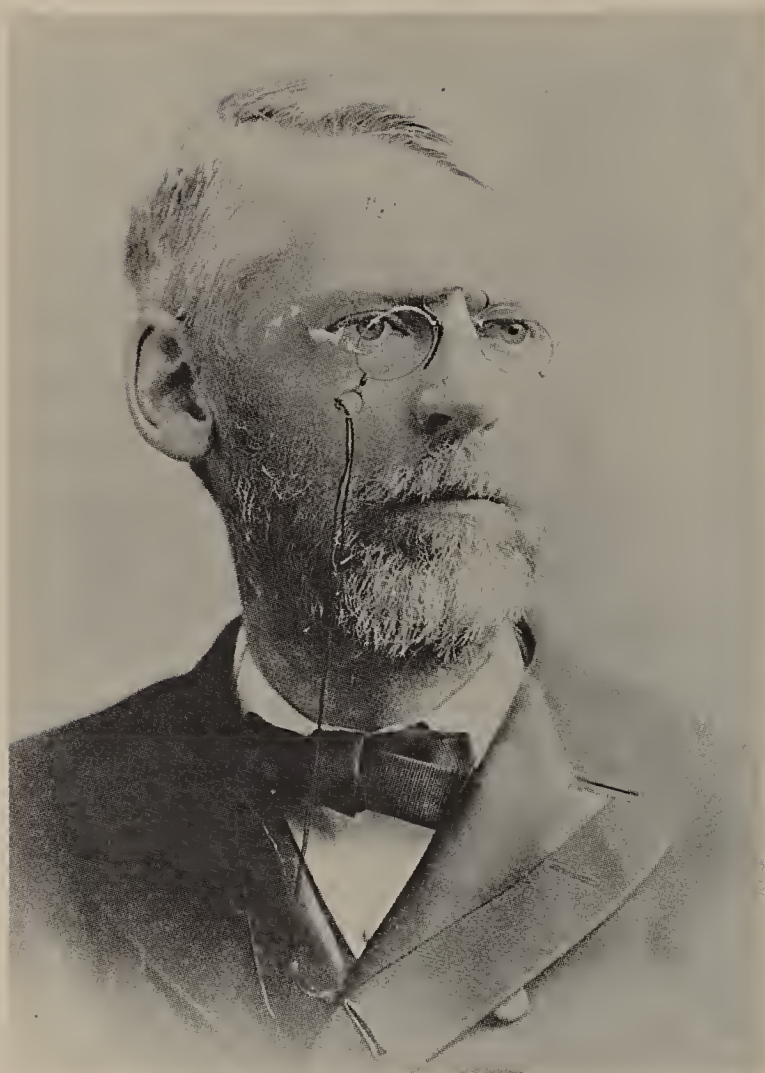
The propeller shaft was installed in the *Dolphin*, and no one raised questions as to its quality until six days before the ship's launching, when a navy inspector finally found defects in it. After the discovery, the

25. Edward Simpson to Chandler, 13 October 1884, and Roach to Chandler, 18 December 1884, Chandler Papers, LC.

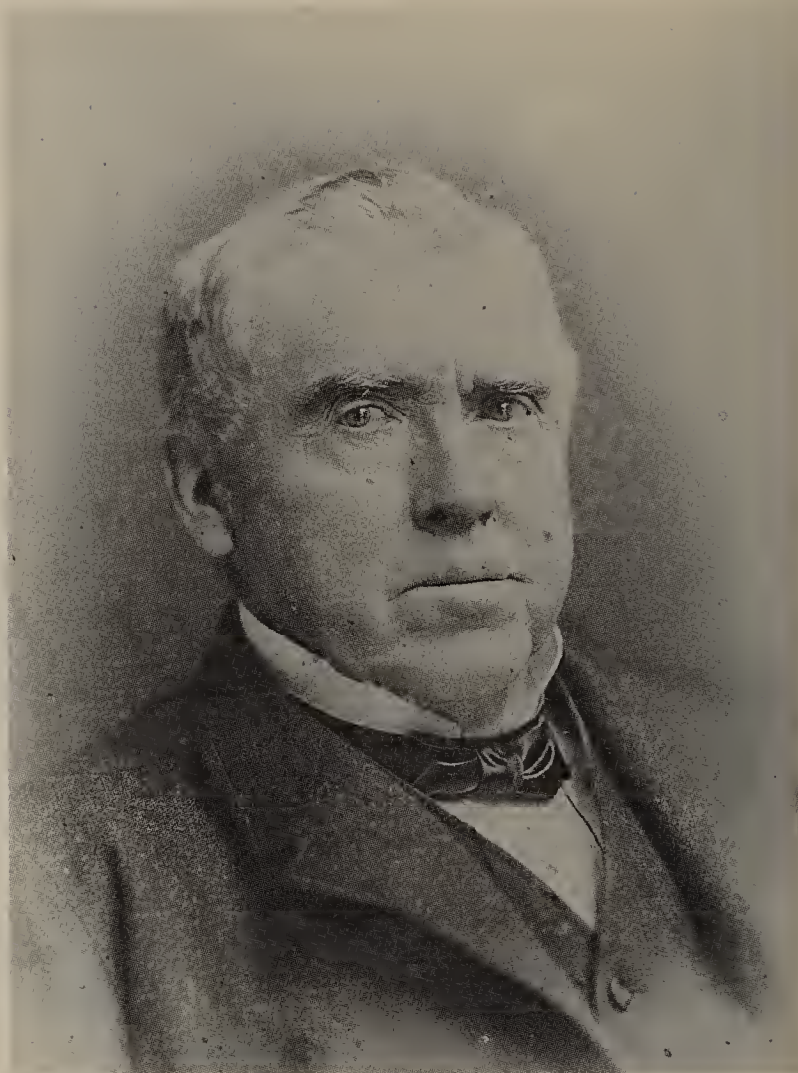
26. "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," 49 Cong., 1st sess., 1886, S. Ex. Doc. 153, pp. 15-20, 26-27.

27. Ibid., 343-369; Roach to Rear Admiral Edward Simpson, 3 December 1884, and Chief Engineer Alexander Henderson to Roach, 5 December 1884, in "Report of the Naval Advisory Board, 1882-1884," box 6, Record Group 45, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter RG 45, NA).





William E. Chandler, secretary of the navy from 1882 to 1885. Photo courtesy of the Naval Historical Center.



Shipbuilder John Roach (1813-1887). Photo courtesy of the Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia.

Naval Advisory Board required Roach to guarantee the shaft's quality even though its defects were common knowledge. Due to poor timing and the inadvisability of cutting out the shaft, test trials went on as scheduled.<sup>28</sup> Roach agreed to guarantee the shaft to expedite the commissioning process and because he was already held liable for the overall quality of the vessel according to the contract. The true responsibility for installing the defective shaft, however, lay with the Naval Advisory Board and its negligent inspectors.<sup>29</sup>

The shaft broke under pressure on the *Dolphin*'s first sea trial, and the story leaked to the press despite Roach's efforts to keep it under wraps. The broken shaft appeared to bear out Democratic suspicions of Roach's poor workmanship, but Chandler correctly noted that America's primitive steel-forging technology was still incapable of producing large steel forgings of good quality.<sup>30</sup> Trying to save face, the Naval Advisory Board urged Roach to retain as much of the original steel

shafting in the *Dolphin* as possible and replace only the defective section, but Roach argued that they should solve the problem by replacing the entire shaft with one of his own wrought iron shafts. His record with iron shafts was excellent and, when the remaining steel shafts proved equally defective, the board complied with Roach's demand.<sup>31</sup>

Bickering over the shaft replacement produced the greatest of all delays by holding up cash installments, or "reservations," that should have been paid to Roach upon completion of various stages of construction. These cash flow problems caused Roach great financial hardship and ultimately led to his business failure. A steel worker at Nashua later wrote to Navy Secretary Whitney that he had warned Roach of the poor quality of the shaft, but Roach had no reason to mistrust the navy's inspectors and he certainly derived no advantage from installing a poor quality shaft.<sup>32</sup> As with the other alterations made to the *Dolphin*, the shaft debacle taught American industry and navy planners important lessons.

28. Roach to Chandler, 18 December 1884, Chandler Papers, LC; "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," S. Ex. Doc. 153, pp. 354-356.

29. Roach to Chandler, 10 December 1884, Chandler Papers, LC.

30. Hirsch, *William C. Whitney*, 277.

31. Roach to Chandler, 18 December 1884, Chandler Papers, LC; "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," S. Ex. Doc., 153, pp. 348-349, 384-386, 391.

32. Shattuck to Whitney, 3 April 1885, Whitney Papers, LC.





With the 1884 presidential elections looming in the distance, the Republicans needed results from the ABCD program. In spite of its value in teaching American engineers how to build modern steel warships and accommodate technological innovation, the *Dolphin's* reputation as a long-delayed, flawed project reflected poorly on the Republicans. The *Dolphin's* failure seemed to confirm accusations of corruption levelled at Chandler. To those following the progress of the ABCDs, charges of graft and collusion began to ring true. The original plan for displaying the fine new Republican warships for the 1884 campaign backfired.

The *Dolphin* had taken her first victim. Instead of portraying the Republicans as the initiators of naval renewal, the *Dolphin* had tainted them with a reputation for incompetence and fraud. After the failed Republican campaign, Chandler retired in March 1885. That same year he campaigned for a Senate seat in his home state of New Hampshire, but, stigmatized by the perceived failure of the *Dolphin* and charges of corruption, he lost the race.<sup>33</sup> After dedicating two years to defending his

record as navy secretary both in the press and to the public, Chandler managed to win election to the Senate. His reputation, however, had been irretrievably damaged, and he continued to be viewed as a corrupt and sinister politician.

President Grover Cleveland's platform included slogans such as "Honest Government by an Honest Man" and "Turn the Rascals Out." Democratic periodicals expressed opinions such as: "What the Navy needs now is an unsparing investigation. We do not believe a Democratic secretary could do a better thing than to devote himself for the first year of his term to investigation solely, without any attempt at construction." Wayne McVeagh in *Century Magazine* called for the incoming navy secretary to cleanse the department.<sup>34</sup> With sentiments such as these in mind, incoming Navy Secretary Whitney swooped in like an avenging angel to uncover Chandler's corruption. He reversed some of his predecessor's orders, such as Chandler's unpopular Order 309 that forbade transshipment of officers' families to convenient points of call at the navy's expense.<sup>35</sup>

A partisan politician and skillful manipulator of the press, Whitney tried to find as much Republican mismanagement as possible. Under the impression that corruption lay hidden in his predecessor's records, Whitney instituted a full-scale financial investigation of the Chandler administration by bringing in an outside accountant to study Chandler's books. Careful financial scrutiny of Chandler's department, however, uncovered no proof of graft or financial corruption. Whitney's private accountant located only four examples of budgetary excess, including the purchase of \$61,000 worth of canvas, the redundant purchase of coal by different paymasters, and the costly repairs to the USS *Omaha* and the USS *Mohican*. In all cases, Whitney blamed the bureaucratic system for overexpenditure and absolved Chandler, stating that "It is the system that is vicious." He later stated: "I feel certain that a similar record of mismanagement, or wasteful expenditure, of injudicious and ill-advised disposition of public moneys might be made by any Secretary under the present system." No less a suspicious critic of Chandler than Abram Hewitt also criticized the naval bureaucracy, stating: "The irresponsible bureau system has been tried and has utterly failed."<sup>36</sup>

33. Allan Nevins, *Grover Cleveland: A Study in Courage* (New York: Dodd and Mead, 1932), 219-110; Reeves, *Gentleman Boss*, 350; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 367-368.

34. *The Nation*, 27 November 1884; Reeves, *Gentleman Boss*, 350; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 259; Tyler, *The American Clyde*, 60.

35. Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 264.

36. *Report of the Secretary of the Navy*, 49 Cong., 1st sess., 1885, H. Ex. Doc. 1, part 3, xxvii-xli; *Cong. Rec.*, 47 Cong., 1st sess., 5514-5515; Peterson, "Navy in the Doldrums," 237, 245; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 370.



Having uncovered little evidence of Chandler's supposed criminal activities in the department's books, Whitney turned to the next source of criminal suspicion: the ABCD warships. The *Dolphin* had received criticism from such notables as former Chief Engineer Benjamin Isherwood, Admiral David Dixon Porter, Chief Constructor Theodore Wilson, other bureau chiefs, and the Democratic press. Even though Isherwood levelled valid criticism at design problems in the ships, most fault-finding with the *Dolphin* was politically motivated. In the case of Porter and the bureau chiefs, inflated egos and attempts to re-establish lost bureaucratic and policy-making power prompted calls for a rejection of innovative designs for more conservative plans. As far as the Democratic press was concerned, the Republican administration could do no right.

The investigation of the *Dolphin* resulted from a combination of good intentions and partisan politics.<sup>37</sup> To accept the *Dolphin* for service, as the Naval Advisory Board recommended on 17 March 1885, would invite bad publicity for passing what appeared to be an inferior product.<sup>38</sup> A satisfactory warship would also vindicate Chandler, Roach, and the Republicans — an outcome that Whitney hoped to avoid. After justly concluding that Chandler and the Naval Advisory Board had poorly planned and executed the ABCD warship program, Whitney tried to prove poor workmanship on the contractor's part through examination of the *Dolphin's* construction.<sup>39</sup> Finding little evidence of poor workmanship, the investigation degenerated into a legal debate over Roach's responsibility for contract-specified speed and power. As Roach prophesied to Chandler during the 1884 presidential campaign:

When the ships are finished, no matter how good they are, there will be a disposition to find fault and if the Democratic Party should succeed, which I hope they will not, in order to vindicate their own charges, they would actually aid in destroying the Character of the vessels and they would find plenty of men in the Construction and Engineers Corps to aid them.<sup>40</sup>

In order to begin his inquisition, Whitney formed a board of his own hand-picked "experts," exclusive of the Naval Advisory Board. As Bradley Fiske described

it, Whitney "packed" the board with three men who had an interest in seeing the *Dolphin* fail. The first board member, Herman Winter, had ample reason to hate Roach. Roach had replaced him as chief constructor of Morgan Iron Works with marine engineer Edward Faron, and Commodore Shufeldt had passed over Winter for Miers Coryell on Roach's advice when selecting a civilian marine engineer for the Naval Advisory Board. Furthermore, Winter served as chief constructor in Whitney's Metropolitan Steamship Company and as superintendent for the Morgan shipping line (a competitor of Roach's Mallory line), and he owned patents on numerous inventions he wished to introduce to the New Navy in any way possible. Winter was also known to associate with Roach's business rivals and personal enemies, such as the Cramps of Cramps Shipyard of Philadelphia. Even Henry Dimock, Whitney's brother-in-law, manager of the Metropolitan line, and Roach's sworn enemy, mentioned in a letter to Whitney that Winter "feels that the [ABCD] ships are bound to be very unsatisfactory."<sup>41</sup>

Whitney also appointed Commander Robley D. Evans, a man extremely prejudiced against Chandler and interested in redeeming himself by defiling Chandler. Commander Evans's story involved even more controversy than the Gorringe episode. In July 1884, Chandler removed Evans from his post as naval inspector of the Fifth Lighthouse District, which extended from Havre de Grace, Maryland, to Beaufort, North Carolina. According to Evans, Chandler placed him on waiting orders for rejecting a convention delegate who had been appointed lightkeeper in return for his political favor.<sup>42</sup> In time, claims were levelled by the press that Evans had run afoul of the Treasury Department to which he was assigned by rejecting Senator Mahone's appointee in Virginia.<sup>43</sup> Months later, in a New York *Tribune* interview, Mahone denied the allegations, claiming he had no knowledge of the affair.<sup>44</sup> For his part, Chandler claimed that:

41. Henry Steers to Chandler, 28 April 1886, Chandler Papers, LC; Dimock to Whitney, 5 April 1885, Whitney Papers, LC; Bradley A. Fiske, *From Midshipman to Rear-Admiral* (New York: Century Company, 1919), 87; Peterson, "Navy in the Doldrums," 238; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 374; Sexton, "Forging the Sword," 134-135; Swann, *John Roach*, 214-217.

42. Robley D. Evans, *A Sailor's Log: Recollections of Forty Years of Naval Life* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1908), 232; Hirsch, *William C. Whitney*, 261-262; Reeves, *Gentleman Boss*, 348-349; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 317-321.

43. *The Nation*, 24 July 1884; Hirsch, *William C. Whitney*, 261-262; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 318.

44. New York *Tribune*, 9 April 1885.

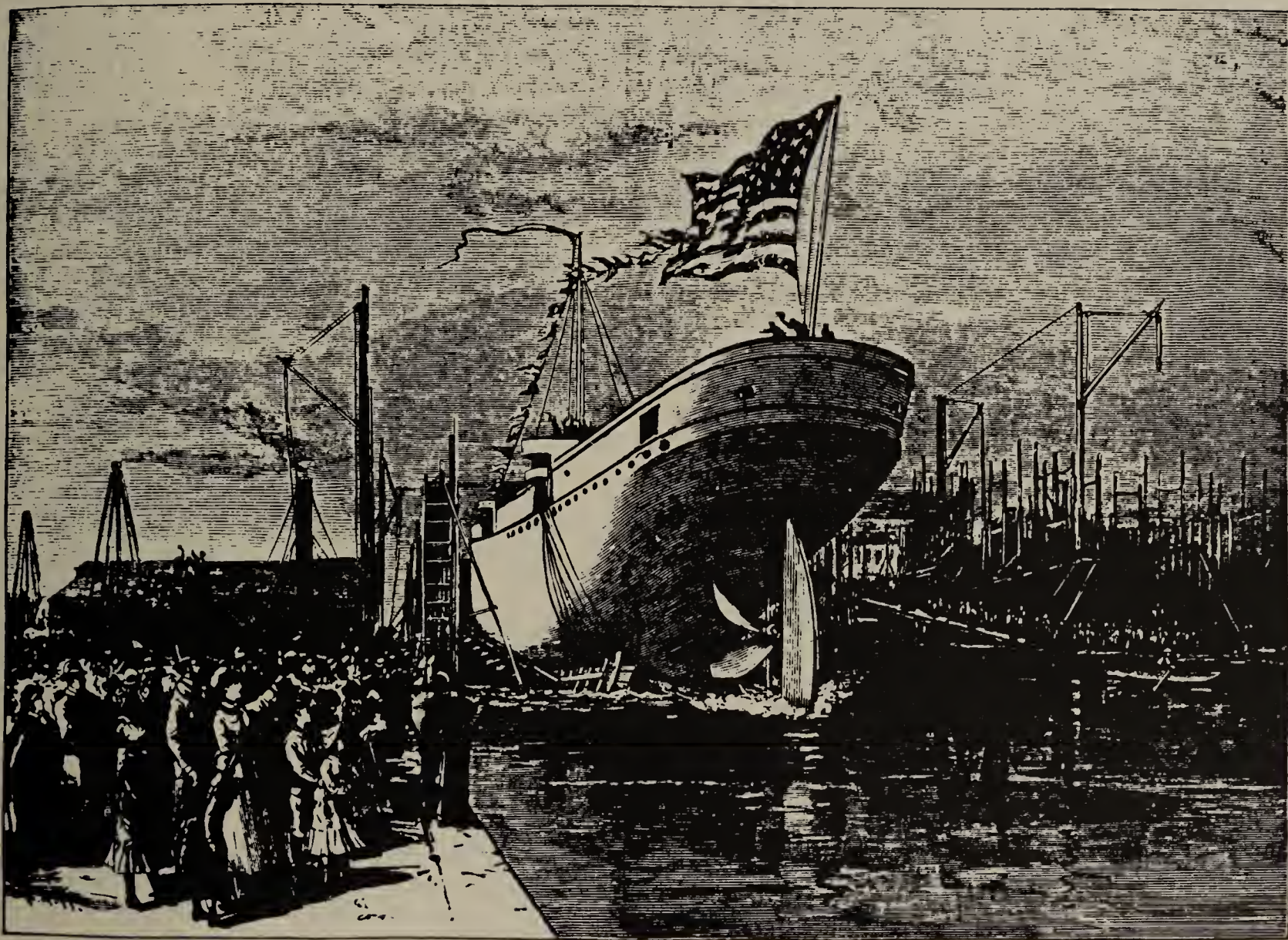
37. "Additional Steam Vessels," 48 Cong., 1st sess., 1884, S. Rept. 161, pp. 20, 97; *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 288-290; Paullin, *Paullin's History of Naval Administration*, 394; Peterson, "Navy in the Doldrums," 244-245.

38. "Report on Second Preliminary Trial of the *Dolphin*," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 291-294.

39. *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), xix.

40. Roach to Chandler, 3 July 1884, Chandler Papers, LC.





The launch of the much-scandalized *Dolphin*, 12 April 1884, as pictured in *Harper's Weekly*. Intended as a symbol of American naval modernization, this initial warship of the New Navy became a political liability for two presidential administrations.

. . . he [Evans] had used profane and indecent language toward members of Congress; that he indulged freely in drink; that he was harsh and unduly severe in his treatment of his subordinates, and that he was in the habit of using the Government steamer under his command for the entertainment of junketing parties composed of Congressmen and other friends.<sup>45</sup>

While Evans did admit to much extra-departmental activity while on duty, neither side of the story was substantiated definitively.<sup>46</sup> Nonetheless, Chandler received a great deal of favorable mail over his handling of the Evans fiasco.<sup>47</sup> Subsequently, Evans became an inspector of material for the Baltimore and Ohio

Railroad and still held his commission. Whitney, whom Evans called the “prince of secretaries,” reinstated him as inspector of the Fifth Lighthouse District soon after becoming navy secretary.<sup>48</sup> Later Evans admitted in his memoirs to a “healthy hatred of him [Chandler] that never flagged.” Evans even departed the ship under his command to avoid contact with Chandler, who paid visits to his son, an officer on board the vessel.<sup>49</sup> His opportunity to exact revenge arose when Whitney assigned him to observe the *Dolphin's* commissioning trials. Years later, he also conspired with Representative John R. Thomas to close down Chandler's Naval War College.

Captain George E. Belknap, the third man in the group, was chairman of the board and a faithful Democrat from Chandler's home state who was due for

45. Ibid., 10 April 1885.

46. Evans, *A Sailor's Log*, 231.

47. Stephen B. Luce to Chandler, 15 March 1887, Chandler Papers, LC; Reeves, *Gentleman Boss*, 349; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 320.

48. Hirsch, *William C. Whitney*, 261; Evans, *A Sailor's Log*, 234.

49. Edwin A. Falk, *Fighting Bob Evans* (New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, 1931), 137-138.



promotion to the rank of commander. Neither Winter, Evans, nor Belknap had a formal education in naval architecture or marine engineering. With Gorringer harrying Roach, and Belknap, Evans, and Winter scrutinizing the *Dolphin*, Chandler's worst nightmare had come true.

Whitney ordered his newly formed board to run the *Dolphin* through trials to ascertain whether or not she met contract standards. Accordingly, the board conducted trials on 12, 18, and 28 May 1885. It scheduled the trials frequently enough that when asked by a reporter whether the trial would be held on Monday, Roach answered sarcastically: "No, the day has been changed. Hereafter the *Dolphin*'s regular weekly trials will take place on Thursdays instead of Mondays as heretofore."<sup>50</sup> In the first two tests the ship was plagued by overheating parts in the crankshaft, causing Whitney to question the ability of the hull's stiffness to hold the propeller shaft in line. The report admitted that the *Dolphin* had made 15 knots on its second trial while developing 2,300 horsepower but discredited this result because it occurred in a smooth sea. The board then redefined 15 knots "sea speed," specified in the Congressional authorization, to equal 17 knots on a smooth sea. On the third test, however, the *Dolphin* achieved an average speed of 15.5 knots with a horsepower of 2,240 and a speed of 15.9 knots during one two-hour period, according to Belknap's own telegraph to Whitney.<sup>51</sup> The Belknap Board inexplicably reduced this entirely satisfactory result to 14.93 knots and 2,169 horsepower in its formal report. The board further reduced the speed to 14.6 knots, reasoning that tidal current increased the ship's apparent speed.<sup>52</sup> In addition, as if straining for evidence of poor workmanship, the rest of the fourteen-page report listed hundreds of minor points such as scratches in the paint, splinters in the deck planking, incomplete filling of cracks with iron putty, and other details. Three main criticisms in the report stemmed from the hawsepipe stopper and steam steering gear, items on which Herman Winter had patents that he hoped to promote.<sup>53</sup>

The Naval Advisory Board produced a scathing thirty-page rebuttal, arguing the Belknap report point for

point. The report showed that the *Dolphin*'s scantlings surpassed measurements prescribed by Lloyd's of London for awarding the highest classification of insurance — 100A.<sup>54</sup> In response to the Belknap trial results, the Naval Advisory Board reported:

Now, we have reason to believe that the log actually read 15.5 knots for the 6 hours. It then appears that this has, by some corrections not stated, been reduced to 14.93, and then, having presumably obtained the proper speed through the water, or the true speed, it is further reduced by a tidal correction of 33-100ths knots. We hesitate to say it was intended to mislead, but it is certainly an entire novelty in navigation.<sup>55</sup>

An additional statement of confidence from five captains on board the *Dolphin* during its sea trials further supported the Naval Advisory Board report. Roach even formed his own committee, consisting of nine respected marine engineers and naval architects from steamship companies and shipbuilding firms, to investigate the Belknap Board's conclusions. In an article published by the *New York Times*, the committee opposed the results of the Belknap Board on virtually every point, stating:

We examined the floors, frames, engines, shafting, supports to boilers, the machinery, and the construction of the vessel generally, as far as we could do so by taking up the flooring in all accessible places, and we are of the opinion that the workmanship and materials are of the best quality; and there is not the slightest evidence to be observed in any part of the vessel that she is "structurally weak" in any particular.<sup>56</sup>

The damage, however, had been done. A month after the Naval Advisory Board report was finished, the board's chairman, Rear Admiral Edward Simpson, admitted in a letter to ex-Secretary Chandler that "... there is no chance of a fair hearing before the people to which Mr. Whitney has referred the matter."<sup>57</sup> Captain Belknap received a promotion to commodore in June 1885, just before submission of the critical report to the secretary.<sup>58</sup> Whitney circulated the unfavorable results of

50. Tyler, *The American Clyde*, 61.

51. "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," S. Ex. Doc. 153, p. 48; "The Dolphin Trial," *Army and Navy Journal* 23, no. 1189 (5 June 1886): 916.

52. "Report of the Examining Board on the trial and construction of the Dolphin," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 310-311.

53. Ibid., 307; "Board of Examiners to the Secretary of the Navy," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 358; "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," S. Ex. Doc. 153, pp. 47-48; Peterson, "The Navy in the Doldrums," 239; Richardson, *William E. Chandler*, 372-373; Swann, *John Roach*, 217-222.

54. "Statement of Naval Advisory Board concerning criticisms on the U.S.S. Dolphin," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 323-353.

55. Ibid. 337.

56. *New York Times*, 14 July 1885.

57. Simpson to Chandler, 10 August 1885, Chandler Papers, LC.

58. "Statement of Naval Advisory Board concerning criticisms on the U.S.S. Dolphin," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 323-353; "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," S. Ex. Doc. 153, pp. 49-52 (for Belknap's title change); Swann, *John Roach*, 214.



the Belknap Board to the press while withholding the Naval Advisory Board's response.<sup>59</sup> Later in his letter to Chandler, Rear Admiral Simpson remarked:

. . . the last year of my official life has been embittered by this effort at humiliation, but I know my reputation is on a solid basis (not won by cruises at Washington) and I await the prevailing spirit of justice which will assert itself only when politics (improperly so called) is banished from the Navy Department. The rage of *party* now blinds men to the consequences of their acts.<sup>60</sup>

Beyond the Belknap Board's nit-picking about defects found in workmanship, the crux of the debate lay in Roach's responsibility for the *Dolphin*'s ability to maintain contract speed and horsepower. In reference to Whitney's struggle with the *Dolphin*, Bradley Fiske wrote that "The navy as a whole sided with John Roach, without whose organization, which he himself had built up, the ships could not have been built so quickly." To this statement Mark Hirsch, Whitney's biographer, has replied: "Fiske, however, overlooked the fact that the *Dolphin* could not sail quickly enough, raid commerce, or escape enemy vessels of war."<sup>61</sup>

This dispute captures the essence of the legal debate over John Roach's contractual obligations. In the recommendation of 3 January 1882 to the House Naval Affairs Committee, the Naval Advisory Board specified: "Also one dispatch vessel or 'clipper,' to have a sea speed of fifteen knots, to be built of iron, and be armed with one 6-inch breech-loading rifle and four revolving guns."<sup>62</sup> The *Dolphin* was also required by contract to maintain an average horsepower of 2,300, unless a deficiency "was due neither to defective workmanship nor materials."<sup>63</sup> These are the terms under which the Naval Advisory Board recommended acceptance of the *Dolphin* to Secretary Whitney after a trial in which the vessel made an average speed of 15.16 knots and an average horsepower of 2,118.<sup>64</sup> Instead, Whitney refused to accept the vessel and asked for a legal ruling by Attorney General Augustus H. Garland.

Whitney had been known to manipulate the law for personal profit in New York, in the case of the Metropolitan Street Railway.<sup>65</sup> He now asked Garland to find whether the government's contract was legal and binding and if Roach could be held liable for the speed and horsepower of the *Dolphin*. In his six-page ruling, Garland concluded that:

. . . no contract exists between Mr. Roach and the United States, and that the large sums of money which have been paid Mr. Roach have passed into his hands without authority of law, and are held by him as so much money had and received to the use of the United States, and may be recovered from him.<sup>66</sup>

Garland claimed that the act of signing the contract was tacit acknowledgement by Roach that the plans were correct, that Roach took responsibility for the speed and horsepower even though the Naval Advisory Board had designed the vessel, and that the agreement was not a valid contract in the first place. Garland was not consistent in his claim, however, or Roach would have been liable for building the *Dolphin* of steel rather than iron, which the congressional authorization had also specified.

Garland essentially argued that the federal government had no obligation to honor the terms of its own contract with Roach. The congressionally established Naval Advisory Board had certified all bills and authorized all installments that Secretary Chandler had paid to Roach. Roach had constructed the *Dolphin* according to naval inspectors' recommendations, within the guidelines and specifications of the Naval Advisory Board, and the board had accepted the *Dolphin* as fulfilling the terms of the contract. Roach had offered to correct any faulty workmanship Whitney's examiners might find, regardless of the expense. Whitney had even stated in the *Annual Report* of 1885 that "if the ship is the Government's design, the contractor should be held to correct construction, but not for the performance of the ship."<sup>67</sup>

John Roach had worked in good faith to the letter of the law, a law which Whitney had no intention of observing. Garland concluded that "nothing short of an

59. *Army and Navy Journal* 23, no. 1170 (23 January 1886): 509.

60. Simpson to Chandler, 10 August 1885, Chandler Papers, LC, emphasis in original.

61. Fiske, *From Midshipman to Rear-Admiral*, 87; Hirsch, *William C. Whitney*, 287.

62. "Recommendations of the Naval Advisory Board Concerning Unarmored Naval Vessels," 47 Cong., 2d sess., H. Ex. Doc. 32, p. 3.

63. "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," S. Ex. Doc. 153, pp. 20-24.

64. "Report on Second Preliminary Trial of the Dolphin," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 291-194.

65. Garret Roach to Chandler, 3 and 25 March 1886, Chandler Papers, LC; Allan Nevins, *Abraham S. Hewitt* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1935), 534-535.

66. "Statement of Naval Advisory Board concerning criticisms on the U.S.S. Dolphin," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 323.

67. "Report of the Examining board on the trial and construction of the Dolphin," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 311 and xxiv.



act of Congress" could allow acceptance of the *Dolphin*.<sup>68</sup> In response to Garland's judgment, the *Army and Navy Journal* commented:

The opinion of the Attorney-General which we publish seems to be a straining of the law against the contractor . . . if anything is notorious it is the unlimited capacity of these legal gentlemen to differ in their interpretation of the law . . . what builder will be likely to contract for work if after inspection and acceptance by an officer appointed by the Department for this express purpose, the complete structure is liable to be rejected by the secretary?<sup>69</sup>

Throughout this period, delays caused by design changes, trials, and bickering pushed Roach's financial situation closer to the brink of collapse. Cash payments, due to Roach upon progressive stages of completion, were interrupted by construction setbacks created by the Naval Advisory Board's design flaws and inferior materials, such as steel plates that failed to meet the board's high ductility standards. Roach had invested \$556,910 of his own cash in the ABCD ships by December 1884, but the department held back over \$200,000 in reserves.<sup>70</sup> Roach had imprudently allowed himself such a low profit margin that there was no room for error in the scheduled completion and payment of cash installments. He also misjudged the ability of the department's engineers to plan and administer warship construction. Roach might have been saved the numerous time-consuming mistakes had the board been staffed with designers experienced in modern warship construction, but no American naval architects were so qualified. Congress had also contributed to Roach's predicament by decentralizing financial authority among several parties, preventing a direct financial relationship between the secretary and the shipbuilder. Consequently, Roach presented bills for materials and labor to the naval inspectors, who certified them and passed them on to the secretary for payment. This circuitous system of financial management caused great delay.<sup>71</sup>

Roach finally fell victim to the *Dolphin*. Due to lack of funds, failing health, and Whitney's bad faith, Roach declared bankruptcy soon after the Garland ruling repudiated the *Dolphin*'s contract. Two shipwrecks in 1884 contributed further to Roach's deteriorating solvency. The wreck of the *Reliance* devalued Roach's stock in the United States and Brazil Steamship Line, which had provided collateral for loans, and a delay of

68. Tyler, *The American Clyde*, 63.

69. *Army and Navy Journal* 22, no. 1143 (18 July 1885): 1036.

70. Roach to Chandler, 18 December 1884, Chandler Papers, LC.

71. Roach to Chandler, 17 January 1885, *ibid*.



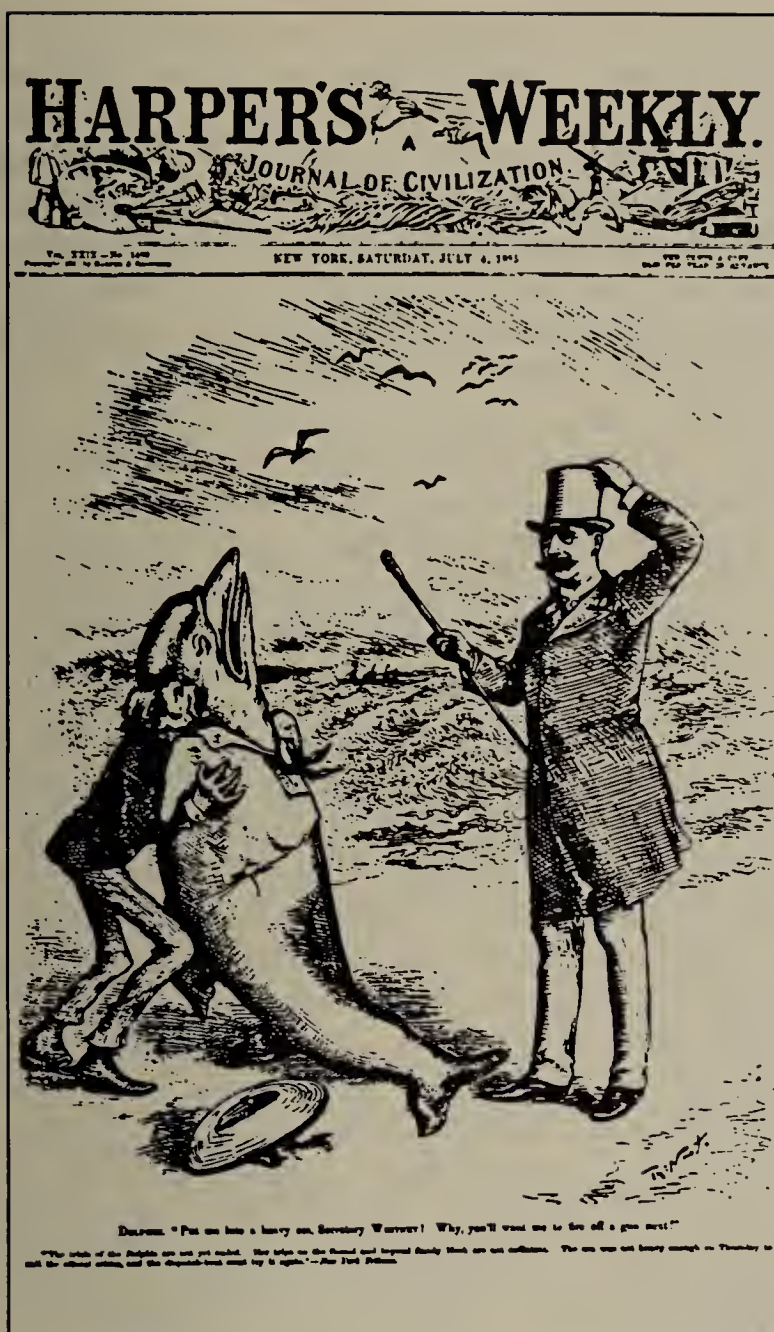
In this *Harper's Weekly* cover from 6 June 1885, the *Dolphin* says, "What! Go to sea, Secretary Whitney! Why, that might make me seasick!"

more than a year for reimbursement of his partial ownership in the wrecked *Guadalupe* forced Roach to dip further into his financial reserves.<sup>72</sup> The punch shop at his shipyard burned down in early August 1884, damaging equipment worth \$200,000, taking two weeks to repair, and costing Roach \$75,000 of his own money to supplement the insurance settlement. By autumn, insurance, interest on raw materials, and wages for watchmen had already amounted to more than the profit and costs of extras on the *Dolphin*. Payroll for Roach's labor force alone had reached nearly \$30,000 per week by July 1884.<sup>73</sup> Delays in payments on the work reduced Roach's liquid assets, and delay in the work tied up his yard, which would normally have been producing merchant steamers at a more profitable rate. Roach had

72. Swann, *John Roach*, 204.

73. Roach to Chandler, 3 July and 18 December 1884, Chandler Papers, LC; Swann, *John Roach*, 193.





A month later, the *Dolphin* lamented: "Put me into a heavy sea, Secretary Whitney! Why, you'll want me to fire off a gun next!"

already experienced financial trouble by 18 December 1884, as this letter to Chandler indicates:

I will now give you some facts which are very embarrassing to me, causing me sleepless nights and keeping my credit on the very verge of ruin, that credit I hold next to my life. Yet much of this trouble is caused by changes and delays. The wharfage, watchmen, and insurance costs me nearly as much as I get from the Government for doing this extra work. The Government has the benefit of those improvements at my expense.<sup>74</sup>

The Garland ruling proved the last straw, since no lender would grant funds for a ship the government would likely reject. On 18 July 1885, Roach gave up the fight with \$4,631,478.23 in assets, \$2,262,877.81 in

liabilities, and only \$22,475.19 in cash, less than one week's payroll for the shipyard.<sup>75</sup>

After months of inconclusive trials and drawn-out legal wrangling with Roach's assignees, the *Dolphin* had also become a political liability to Whitney. The nation's largest shipbuilder was bankrupt, and the Republicans placed the blame squarely in his lap. In October of 1885, George E. Weed, one of the assignees, wrote to Chandler that "from the interview we have had with Whitney . . . he appreciates the hole which both he and the Attorney Genl. are in and would like to get out as quietly and easily as possible."<sup>76</sup>

The strongest charges levelled against the ship were inability to maintain contract speed and inherent structural weakness, which the Belknap Board believed could be tested ". . . only in one of two ways — tear her to pieces or send her to sea in heavy weather."<sup>77</sup> Captain Richard W. Meade III, famed for negotiating the abortive treaty of 1872 with Samoa for American use of Pago Pago, volunteered to supervise the board's trial. Captain Meade, who had disclosed to Congress Roach's past reuse of a sound propeller shaft from the scrapped *Nevada* in the USS *Trenton*, stated to Whitney: "I will take the *Dolphin* out to sea, we will hunt for a storm and if the *Dolphin* does not come back, you may conclude that she was structurally weak. If we do come back, it will be a different story."<sup>78</sup> In an effort to settle the matter once and for all, Whitney sent the necessary orders to Meade, who began the trial on 17 December 1885, running from New York to Rhode Island to Norfolk, Virginia. With word of a storm brewing off Cape Hatteras, Meade took on a "Board of Experts" hand-picked by Whitney and headed into the eye of the storm.<sup>79</sup> Meade described the weather conditions during the trial as a "moderate gale," while other sources reported winds of up to seventy miles per hour.<sup>80</sup> Assistant Engineer William F. Durand, an eyewitness to the event, recounted the trial:

For most of the next two hours the forward part of the ship was pretty well under water. Great waves broke over the bow and surged aft over the deck. I

75. George Weed to Chandler, 14 May 1886, Chandler Papers, LC; Swann, *John Roach*, 227.

76. Weed to Chandler, 10 October 1885, Chandler Papers, LC; William F. Durand, *Adventures — In the Navy, in Education, Science, Engineering, and in War: A Life Story* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1953), 28.

77. "Board of Examiners to the Secretary of the Navy," *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1885), 354.

78. Durand, *Adventures*, 28; Swann, *John Roach*, 140.

79. Durand, *Adventures*, 29.

80. "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," S. Ex. Doc. 153, p. 71; New York *Tribune*, 16 March 1886.

74. Roach to Chandler, 18 December 1884, Chandler Papers, LC.



recall that a full headed-up barrel of pork standing on the deck forward was picked up and hurled aft along the deck like a missile out of a siege gun. Luckily no one was in its path.<sup>81</sup>

Satisfied with the *Dolphin's* structural integrity and fearing that the immense weight of water might swamp the little ship, Captain Meade ordered her around and steamed away from the storm at three-quarters speed.<sup>82</sup>

The examiners' report to Whitney focused on design flaws in the vessel, but they found only one defect in the *Dolphin's* workmanship: a leaky boiler seam.<sup>83</sup> In summing up his report, Captain Meade observed:

During this time neither myself or officers observed any lack of strength in hull or machinery, and through the voice-tube from the pilot-house I was in constant communication with the engine-room. If any structural weakness exists it did not exhibit itself; and the engines ran smoothly, and were only stopped once in sixty-four hours, and then merely to sound. There was but slight tendency to heat reported, and no unusual amount of oil or water, for a new ship, used on bearings or journals. The ship arrived at Hampton Roads the next morning.

To sum up, I consider the *Dolphin* reasonably strong, and her machinery reliable.<sup>84</sup>

Durand seconded these remarks, stating that "During the entire run in the Hatteras storm there was no sign or indication whatever of structural weakness in the ship. Not a rivet started, no leak developed, no crack gave warning of incipient failure. So far as the seaworthiness of the ship was concerned, the score was perfect."<sup>85</sup> And the *Harper's Weekly* of 16 January reported that "Her seamen came back with profound respect for her sailing qualities and very little has been said by the Board of Experts about her structural weakness."<sup>86</sup> Proving structurally sound under the very conditions prescribed by the Belknap Board, the *Dolphin* was finally vindicated.

In an effort to shield himself from criticism, Whitney suppressed the favorable results of the Hatteras test, as he had done with the Naval Advisory Board's response to the Belknap report. Meade did not forward the favorable report of the *Dolphin's* Chief Engineer

John Lowe to the department, as was customary for an officer's report. In addition, Meade moderated the tone of his report for Whitney's sake but spoke far more favorably of the *Dolphin's* performance in public, prompting Henry Steers to write to Chandler: "They did not break down & Mead [*sic*] is very emphatic in the statement that she did not show any signs of weakness."<sup>87</sup> The *Army and Navy Journal* of 23 January 1886 quoted Whitney as stating that:

It is proper to say that most of the statements that have been circulated were erroneous. She did not encounter any very unusual weather. The reports about her being in a gale of wind blowing 70 miles per hour are not true. No such gale occurred during the trip.<sup>88</sup>

The *Dolphin* had become a curse to Whitney as it had to Chandler and Roach. Whitney's attempt to turn the *Dolphin* scandal to political advantage against the Republicans had backfired. Whitney deducted only \$28,161 from the final payments on the *Dolphin* due to the vessel's supposed failure to meet specifications. Having suffered from cancer ever since the *Dolphin* scandal began, Roach finally died on 18 January 1887. Later, his heirs took legal action against the federal government to recover the deduction and the cost the government incurred by taking control of the bankrupt Morgan Iron Works to finish the other cruisers. The heirs gained a favorable verdict in August 1890, with the final settlement of nearly \$360,000 being granted in April 1898.<sup>89</sup>

Meanwhile, many of Roach's assets were sold at auction, but the shipyard at Chester continued to produce for a number of years. After the *Dolphin* proved structurally sound, Whitney found no legal basis for rejecting the dispatch vessel. This provided political fodder for the Republicans, proving in their minds that the secretary was bent on ruining Chandler and Roach. Politically, the effect of the Roach failure on the Democrats is difficult to gauge, although the bankruptcy of the nation's largest shipbuilder and the resulting 2,400 layoffs must not have been well received by either big business or labor.<sup>90</sup> The next presidential election brought the Republicans back into the White House.

87. George E. Weed to Chandler, 1 May 1886, and Steers to Chandler, 4 January 1886, Chandler Papers, LC.

88. The *New York Times*, 16 January 1886.

89. "Report on the Committee on Claims," 52 Cong., 1st sess., 1890, S. Rept. 745; "Claims of Roach's Heirs," 54 Cong., 1st sess., 1898, S. Rept. 754; *United States Statutes at Large*, vol. 30, pp. 1409, 1450; Brandt, "Steel and the New Navy," 25-26.

90. "Political Shipbuilding," *The Nation* 41, no. 1047 (1885): 106.

81. Durand, *Adventures*, 30.

82. "Ships Chicago, Boston, Atlanta and Dolphin," S. Ex. Doc. 153, pp. 70-72.

83. *Ibid.*, 67-68.

84. *Ibid.*, 72.

85. Durand, *Adventures*, 31.

86. *Harper's Weekly*, 16 January 1886.



A test cruise around the world from 1888 to 1889 finally dispelled any doubts about the *Dolphin's* construction. In an effort to vindicate the preceding Republican administration, the new Republican Navy Secretary Benjamin F. Tracy noted in the *Annual Report of the Secretary of the Navy* for 1889 that the vessel had run 58,000 miles for 9,000 hours with only two hours down time for service. During that cruise, the *Dolphin* maintained an average speed of fourteen knots with a top speed of sixteen knots under favorable conditions. On 2 October 1889, after the world cruise and three years and nine months in service, a board of inspectors reported only slight repairs necessary to the vessel's bearings. Such evidence convinced Tracy that "in view of the confident predictions with which, at the onset of her career, the official condemnation of the vessel was somewhat prematurely pronounced by expert and inexpert judges alike."<sup>91</sup> President Benjamin Harrison concurred in his first annual message to Congress, stating that ". . . it is gratifying to be able to state that a cruise around the world, from which she has recently returned, has demonstrated that she is a first-class vessel of her rate."<sup>92</sup>

During the Spanish American War, the *Dolphin* served as dispatch vessel for the blockading squadron off Cuba, relaying messages between Admiral Sampson off Santiago and Key West, Florida. The vessel also served as a pleasure boat for Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson and as a navy promotional vessel for congressional cruises. She was decommissioned on 8 December 1921 after exactly thirty-six years of service. In February 1922 she was sold to Mexico and served in the Mexican navy until 1927 as the *Plan de Guadalupe*.<sup>93</sup>

How could policy makers have better served the needs of the country and of the navy? Unfortunately, technology does not answer to the whims of partisan politics. Instead, it requires planning, preparation, sound organization, and close attention to detail — matters paid little attention in the case of the *Dolphin*. Mistake heaped upon mistake by succeeding administrations led inevitably to the *Dolphin* scandal, from which neither party emerged untainted. Blame for the problems associated with the *Dolphin*, typically credited to

corruption, should have been directed instead at political infighting, mismanagement, and inexperience. These political and administrative blunders resulted in a warship that was over budget and overdue.

For their parts, men like William E. Chandler, John Roach, and William C. Whitney could only see as far as their own political or economic interests. Secretary Chandler relied on an inexperienced board of advisors and compounded mistakes by rushing the design process. Roach underbid the vessel, accepting a prohibitively small profit margin. In the interest of partisan politics, Secretary Whitney rejected the ship's workmanship and contractual legality, placing his own actions in question. Had these men understood that naval shipbuilding answers not only to the dictates of the shipyard work bell but also to the political party that controls Congress, they might have avoided the curse of the *Dolphin*.



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91. *Report of the Secretary of the Navy* (1889), 51 Cong., 1st sess., H. Ex. Doc. 1, Part 3, pp. 6-7.

92. James D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897*, vol. 9 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 44.

93. *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, vol. 2, s.v. *Dolphin* (Washington, D.C.: Navy Department, 1963), 286; Swann, *John Roach*, 234; K. Jack Bauer and Stephen S. Roberts, *Register of Ships of the U.S. Navy, 1775-1990* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 161.



## Ocean Liner Travel a Century Ago

FRANK O. BRAYNARD

“**T**he screw has begun to shake and the motion is not at all unpleasant in the stateroom. I hope to mail this with the pilot.” So wrote thirty-three-year-old Hamline University Professor Henry Leslie Osborn, sailing with his wife Effie on their first trip to Europe. It was 9 July 1889.

As it would turn out, both would be terribly seasick and would rue the day they had bought tickets on the Anchor Line’s 5,495-ton *Furnessia*. A young Doctor of Philosophy, “Harry” had grown up on a farm in Madison, New Jersey. Already a marine biology professor of promise, he was teaching in St. Paul, Minnesota, at Hamline University. He had been schooled in his specialized field at the Cold Spring Fish Hatchery at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island, New York, and had made a number of trips out to the Grand Banks to observe fish and fishermen in their natural habitat. Behind his love of nature and fish was a strong urge to see the world and study older civilizations. Before he would end his career serving several years as acting president of Hamline, Dr. Osborn would become a self-taught scholar on architecture, stained glass windows, and medieval culture. But in 1889, this Minnesota scholar-to-be and his wife wrote many letters home describing their first ocean crossing for relatives and giving readers a century later a glimpse at late nineteenth-century ocean liner travel.

“Most people on board seem serious folks of ‘one I am which’ and I think they will not be much given to those disgusting amusements which the freedom of the high seas generally condones. . . .” Strictly brought up, Osborn was very conservative in his tastes. His wife, Effie, was the child of a formidable Scottish gold miner who had appeared in San Francisco one day loaded with money and unwilling to tell anyone about his past. Mrs. Osborn was, if anything, even more conservative than her husband. They were to become inveterate travellers.

Things were not too bad at first. “They say the sea has been very quiet outside for several days. This will be in our favor. . . .” Osborn’s letter continued. He then wrote about a seasickness remedy: “First — lemons —

the approved way seems to be to cut a hole in the lemon — imbed a square of sugar in the hole and then suck — we have not yet felt it necessary. We have our chairs in a good place for the view and shade and are now thoroughly cool and comfortable.”

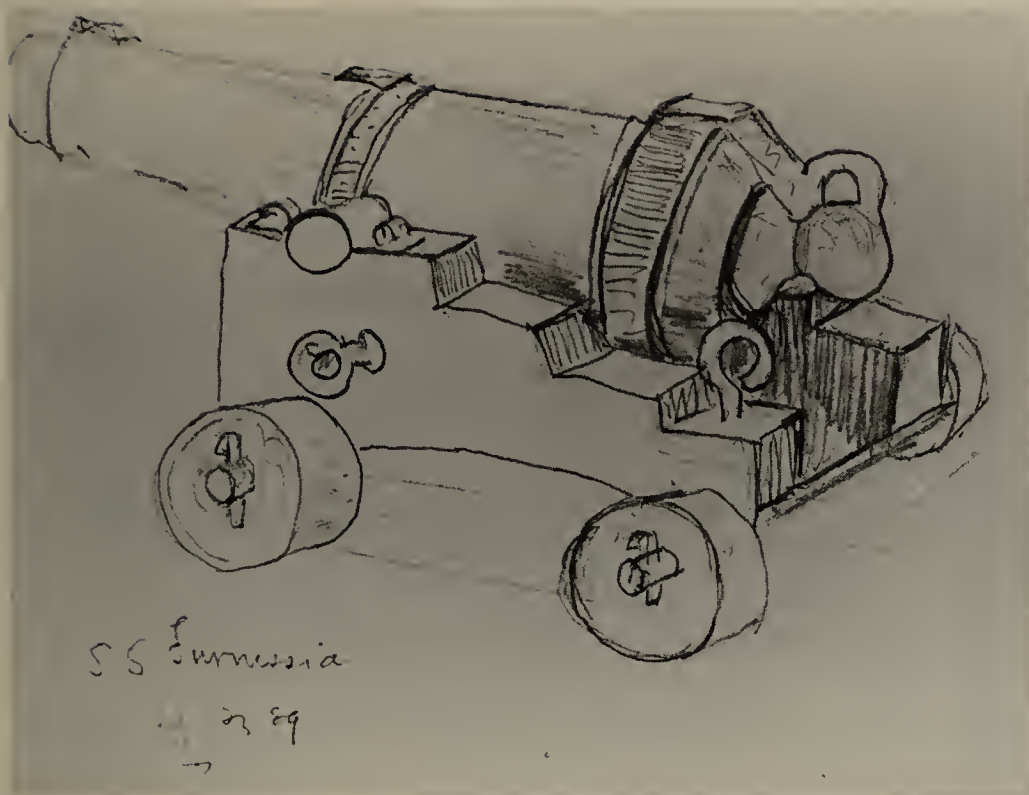
At this point Osborn, who loved to make quick sketches and do watercolors to illustrate his letters, made a little drawing of the ship’s saluting cannon. Four days passed, days of torture and tumult, no days in which to write letters, but finally, at 1 p.m. on 13 July, a Saturday, the journal commenced again:

“We seem to be in fairly good trim today. Effie has been a little behind me in getting about. . . . We had a quiet time on Wed. morning and got up and about. . . . By evening it was rough and blustery and there was a good deal of motion. We were both sick that night and very miserable all day Thursday. We tried to eat various things but they didn’t seem to be at all necessary to our systems. . . . We would have been glad enough to be back home. . . . On Thursday evening I got out for a while and haven’t been sick since. On Friday morning I got up feeling much better and was about all day. I had all my regular meals at the table and began to live again. During the morning Effie got on deck in the steamer chair. She spent the day and all night in the chair and has been there most of the time since. Today she is feeling quite comfortable.

“The steamer is very full, too full for comfort, many of the rooms are small, and have four passengers. The number who were to be seen on Wednesday was, according to all reports, very small. But today the decks are pretty well filled and there seems to be a very great deal of satisfaction on some countenances. The personnel of the First Cabin passengers is very varied. I haven’t yet made the acquaintance of very many, but some have impressed themselves on me. Today the sea is not rough, the sky is clear and everything is lovely. . . .

“We are now on the Grand Banks. Here ten years ago under very different circumstances. I am expecting to see some fishermen. . . .





A signaling cannon, common on all ships before whistles were used. Although the *Furnessia* had a whistle, she still retained her old-style signaling cannon, sketched here by Henry L. Osborn. All photos of Osborn's sketches are courtesy of the author.

"Steamer coming . . . that causes great excitement . . . everyone will try to see her as she passes and will speculate on the Line she belongs to. It is strange how quickly we meet and pass one of the steamers. . . . All the invalids have settled back into a semi-comatose state to await some new excitement. It takes about 20 minutes to pass a steamer. And after it has passed there is a complete collapse. When the vessels are opposite each vessel dips a flag which hangs at the stern. Each vessel reports meeting the other when she gets into port, and so friends hear a little something. The vessel we passed telegraphed us that she had met no icebergs. . . .

"This morning I went forward among the sailors. . . . They asked me which cabin I was in and when I said 'first' one of them drew a chalk line around me and said I must 'stand a snout' because I was in their territory. So I gave them a quarter and told them to get some beer. They do this to all the passengers who go into the forward part of the vessel. They told me that now I had a free pass to all parts of the ship. . . .

"Last night we ran into a fog bank and they kept a sharp lookout and blew a whistle every few minutes. The fog did not last long and I felt better when it lifted.

"After dinner we passed a full rigged ship not under full sail. She was an American vessel and floated the Stars and Stripes at her mizzen peak. It looked good to see the flag of our country. After a bit we took a walk forward and found that the passengers of 2 class and steerage were holding service. One of their number, a ministerial looking young man, was leading a hymn and they sang beautifully. They had some singers who were an improvement on our choir (First Cabin services had

been held earlier). We did not at first recognize the music but admired the tune very much. It turned out to be 'Nearer My God to Thee.'

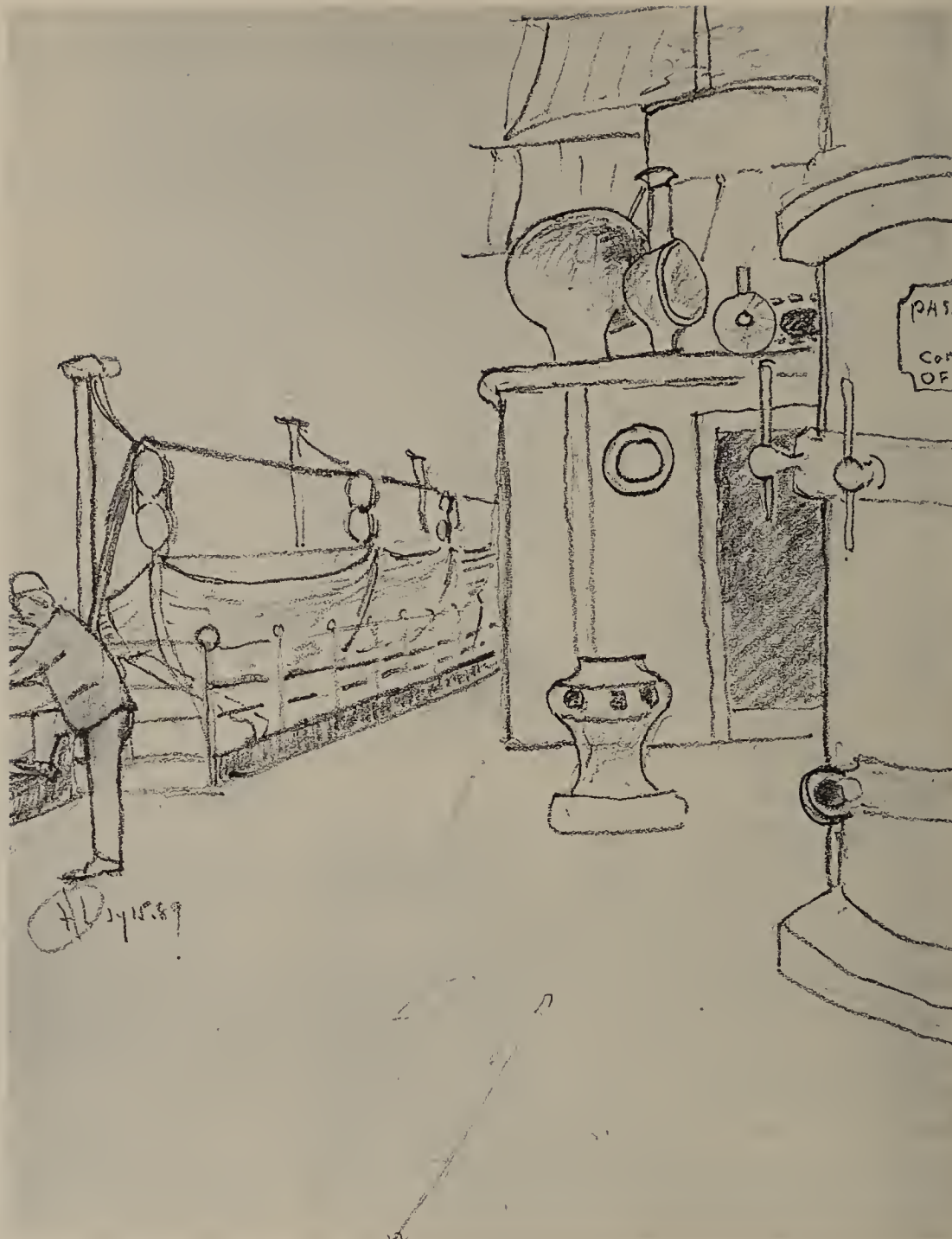
"My appetite is becoming like a razor's edge. I ate at dinner today, soup (mock turtle), Chicken a la creme and potatoes, and turkey with more potatoes and rice, spring lamb and mint-sauce, wine jelly, mints and raisins and banana. This took nearly one hour and was a good dinner. I feel as if now I could stand a good deal of shaking. Effie is nearly as well but bad air goes against her so that she can't be very comfortable in the stateroom. She slept last night in the gallery on a sofa and thinks she will sleep there again tonight.

"We have a cloudy night, no sunset and no moonlight. Some of the party were singing songs on deck and I joined them. I found it was very enjoyable. We sang songs from books belonging to the vessel. They have a large number of books, enough for all. The ship owns a very good library of 191 volumes. Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Kingsley, Black and a large number of music books. I have taken Kingsley's 'At Last' and mean to read it through. It is full of natural history and is very interesting.

"The day was noticeable for the entire absence of carousing, which is common on the fashionable lines. The entire party is in this respect very fine. There is no gambling, no drunkenness, and that is unlike my expectation. I have supposed that ocean voyages were always marred by that sort of thing.

"Monday, July 15 — We are still doing finely. The sailing for the last 24 hours will very soon be nearly 300 miles we all hope.





Looking forward toward the first of her two smokestacks on *Furnessia*. See the square yards with sails on her foremast. The sign at right would have read: "Passengers May Not Converse With Officers." Note the initials under the man at left – an H. and an L. within an O – and the date: 15 July 1889.

"In a conversation this morning a lady told me several of the notions of land folks . . . one was that the ship stopped at midnight to let the engines cool off . . . another that while we were in the Gulf Stream the vessel pumps in fresh water because the stream was fresh water. One lady said to the steward that she had seen rough waters in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. 'Oh but that is in the Pacific Ocean,' was the answer. One woman ascribed the smell which comes up from the hatches to the sewerage of the vessel and began a sanitary scare. Odd how indefinite some information is."

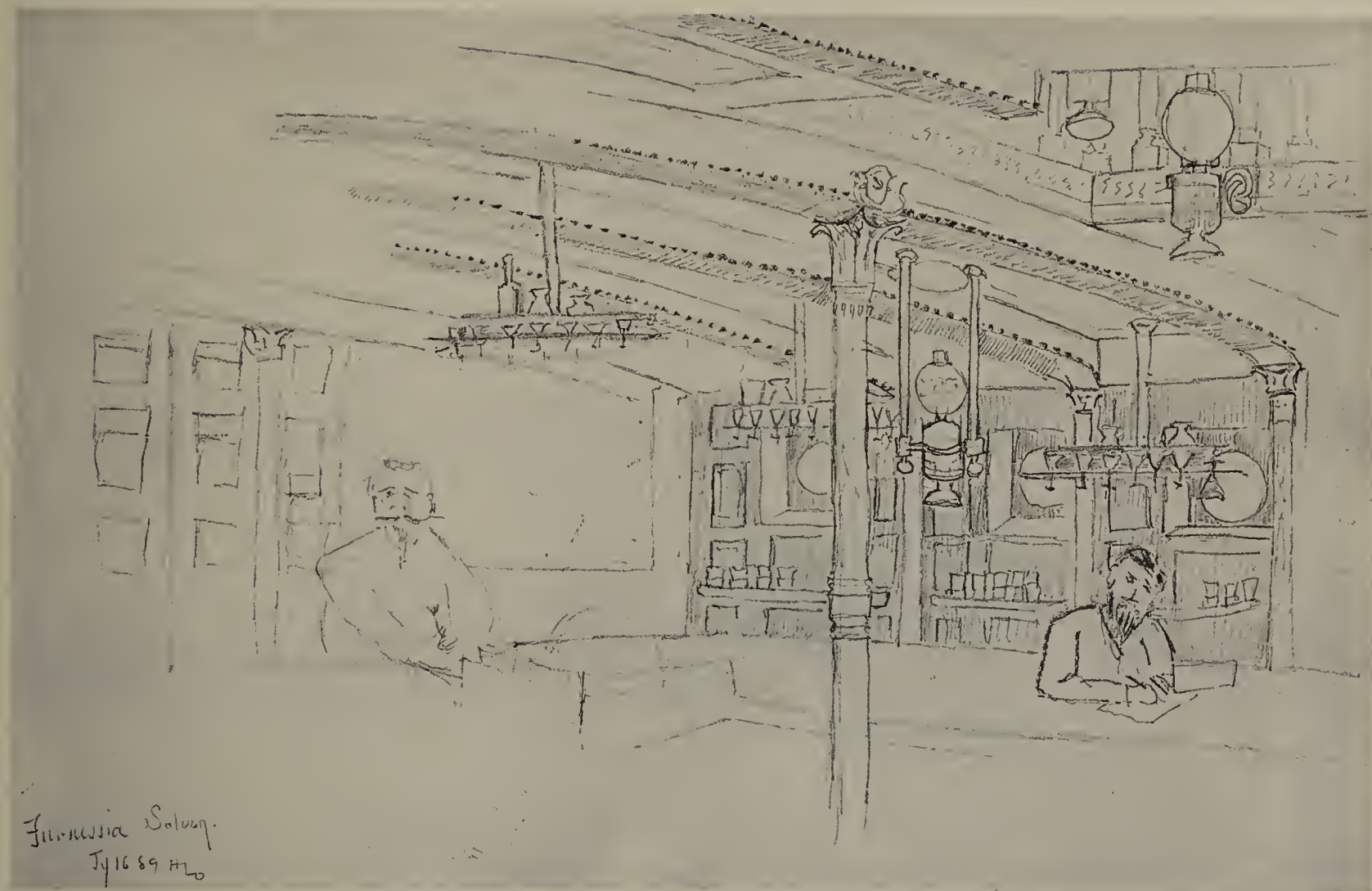
At this point the diary was illustrated with a little sketch of a man sitting all wrapped up in blankets in a deck chair. Dr. Osborn made two large sketches also that day, one of the saloon and the other looking forward toward the after stack and foremast, with square sails pulling.

"Talking, laughing, card playing or walking about and visiting seem the chief amusements. They are setting up some entertainment, a puppet show, some charades and music are to be provided. It is raining outside and everyone is in the saloon or the room above. All the time the boat screw throbs on . . . we are over 2,000 miles from Sandy Hook."

Wednesday, July 17 — "It was very rough today. Everybody spent the day in their berths to escape serious consequences. I got out at noon and spent some time on deck. The sea broke over the bows and flooded the main deck with water and the passengers of that section were confined. In the afternoon a sail was blown away. Toward evening the waters became smoother and 'all was well.'

"Today, July 18, the Captain made everyone feel good (who heard him) by saying that tomorrow we can





Osborn also sketched the *Furnessia*'s dining saloon. Note the oil lamps and glass-holding devices hanging from the ceiling on gimbels, hinting at how much the little liner would roll. See also (top right) the luxurious opening to the deck above, evidence of the ship's flagship status with the Anchor Line.

mail letters. Tomorrow evening we shall be at Moville, where we land all passengers for Ireland.

"The steerage people mostly and a few others left the vessel (Sat., July 20) at Moville. A small side wheel steamer took the cheering crowd rapidly up the river toward the interior and we got quickly underway."

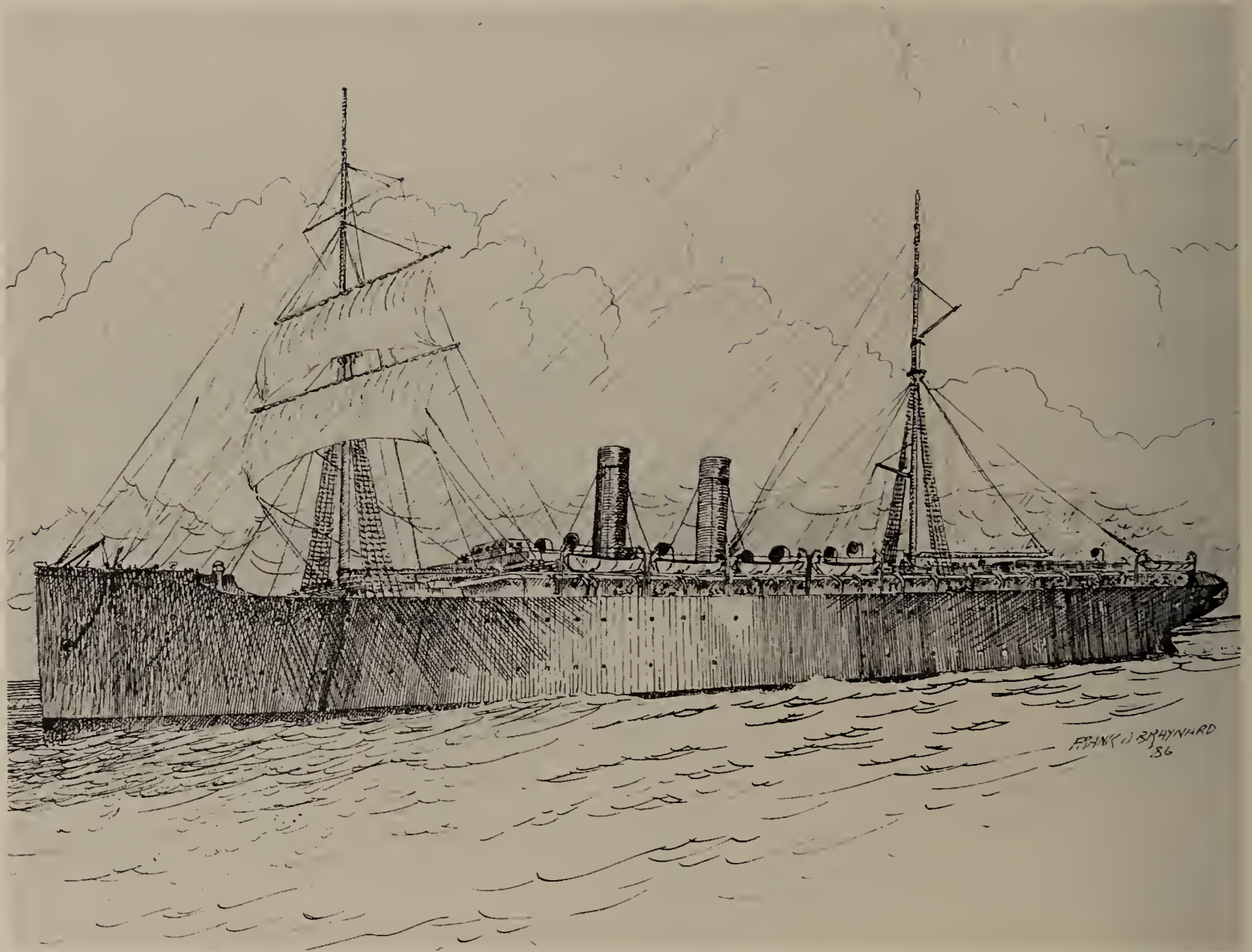
Effie Osborn's diary did not begin until 13 July, and with reason, as she explains:

"We haven't been keeping journals the last few days but at least we are coming out of the horrors, and would hope to be more regular in all our habits," she wrote on 13 July, the fifth day of the crossing. "Things went pretty well with us until Wednesday afternoon. Harry felt a little off all day, but there was nothing serious until after lunch. We both made a desperate struggle to manage that meal, but did not have very brilliant success. Harry had to give up first, but I soon followed him and had a longer attack. Oh what a night we had, but Thursday was still worse, and every time almost that we could get up courage enough to speak at all we wished 'we hadn't come' and thought what fools

we were, that there couldn't be enough in all Europe to pay us for all the miseries we were going through. If there had been any way to get back, we would have jumped at the chance and given up Europe for all time. Harry said he'd be willing to sacrifice all the money he had put in to it, if he could only be landed in New York. Oh how we groaned to think we had been foolish enough to start.

"Harry began to improve Thursday night, but I put in a wretched night, worse than the one before. If anything had happened I don't believe I would have moved unless I had been dragged out of my berth. On Friday H. got up early and was able to go to breakfast. He got along so well I thought I'd make a desperate effort. The Stewardess brought me some gruel and, of course, I refused for I *hate* the stuff. But she begged me to just taste it, she knew it would do me good. I finally consented and it really tasted good and what is still better it stayed down and from that time I began to improve. During the morning I managed to crawl out and H. helped me up on deck, and here I have been





The 5,495-ton *Furnessia* carried thousands of passengers from Glasgow to New York from 1880 until she was scrapped in 1911. Illustration by the author.

almost ever since. Nearly everyone was sick on Thursday. The odors are simply awful, worse now than the motion.

"We are making very slow time, and don't expect to reach Glasgow before next Saturday. The weather is all that could be desired, but the firemen and sailors are green and besides they were obliged to take on American coal and it don't seem to work as well as the English coal. It was so tormenting while we were sick to feel that we were making only 10 or 12 miles an hour. Now, however, we take a more cheerful view of things and are really enjoying the voyage . . . .

"We are very much pleased with most of the passengers, but there are a few objectionable ones. The worst is a very coarse bold women, we were disgusted with her from the first, and our disgust increased every hour. She is so loud and makes herself so conspicuous. It turns out that she is a widow and is grieving so for her husband that a change of scene was an absolute

necessity. No one would have guessed it if she had left them to find out for themselves, and, now I doubt whether anybody believes in her grief. She is wild about the men and is very much disgusted with the people on board. Says they are so slow and pokey that she has done everything to stir them up and get up some fun but nobody falls in with it. Night before last I heard she went down to dinner in full dress — light blue silk, with low neck back and front. There is a conspicuous couple, bride and groom, everyone says they are not at all objectionable but very amusing. They are 'old fools' and those are said to be the worst. His devotion is perfectly killing. He watches almost every breath she draws. Last night I spent the night in my steamer chair on deck. I was afraid I'd have another siege if I tried to go downstairs. Harry stayed up until about 3 a.m. and then he went down . . . .

"The vessel is not as luxurious as we expected, but we get along well enough.



Sunday, July 14 — “There has been no Sabbath breaking today and it has been kept as sacred as it would be at home — in fact there has been a solemnity about it. This afternoon at 2:30 services were held in the saloon and were very interesting. On the English ships I believe the Captain always reads the Episcopal service and not usually in an impressive way, and that is all that is done. But here there are several ministers on board and they conducted services and there was something very solemn and touching in it all. And it was far more impressive than services on land. This evening we went forward and the 2nd cabin and steerage passengers were holding services. We could not hear anything but the singing, but that really sounded very pretty.

“Tuesday, July 16th. . . . I didn’t write up my journal yesterday, not because I was sick and couldn’t but because I was so well. I kept moving around and didn’t get at it. We are making better time now I am happy to say. I hear they have gotten down to the English coal and that is the reason for the improvement.

“It seems so funny now to look back on our seasickness and think of the awful depths to which our spirits sank. Now we are thoroughly seasoned it seems very silly for us to have felt as we did. I wonder if it had been possible for us to turn back if we would have been fools enough to give up our trip. I am thankful it wasn’t tested and that we were obliged to keep on whether we wished it or not. . . .”

The Osborns returned home two months later on the *Anchoria*, another Anchor Line steamer. They would make other Atlantic voyages in 1907, 1910, 1914, 1926, 1928 and 1930, becoming seasoned travelers.



*Frank Osborn Braynard is curator of the American Merchant Marine Museum at Kings Point, New York, and is the great-nephew of Henry Leslie and Effie Osborn. He attributes much of his love of liners and travel to their influence and to that of their niece, his mother, who sailed with them on a number of their pre-World War I trips. He is the author of more than thirty books. His first published work, “The First American Steam Passenger Line to South America,” appeared in The American Neptune, Volume 4, Number 2, April 1944.*

## The Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation Archives

VICTOR A. LEWINSON AND KURT HASSELBALCH

The purpose of this note is to describe the archival part of a substantial collection of papers, photographs, and ship plans in the Hart Nautical Collections (HNC) of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Museum. Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation gave most of the collection to MIT in 1980, with additional accessions in 1986 and 1990. The numbers of negatives (80,000) and ship plans (13,000) in the collection are so large that resources have permitted only a partial inventory by staff. As a first step, the archives have been studied, and a result of this study is a detailed finding aid. The present description, we hope, will give interested students an idea of the content and possible usefulness of the collection.

### HISTORY

Most of the material concerns the Fore River Shipyard of the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, a major U.S. shipbuilder, and its predecessors or acquisitions. A brief chronology follows:

1884: Fore River Engine Co. started by Thomas A. Watson in East Braintree, MA.

1900-01: Company moved to Quincy, MA and became Fore River Ship & Engine Co. (FRS&E).

1902: FRS&E went public.

1903: FRS&E became Fore River Shipbuilding Co. (FRSb).



1904: Watson left shipbuilding.

1913: Bethlehem Steel Co. (BSC) bought yard and changed name to Fore River Shipbuilding Corporation (also FRSb).

1917: FRSb renamed Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation (BETH).

1917-19: World War I plants open at Squantum, MA, Buffalo, NY (Black Rock), and Providence, RI (Fields Point).

1922: BETH bought Simpson's Patent Dry Dock Co.

1928: BETH bought Atlantic Works.

1942-05: BETH Hingham World War II plant open.

1963-04: General Dynamics (GD) took over Quincy yard.

1986: Quincy Yard closed by GD.

The founder of the Fore River shipyard was Thomas A. Watson (1854-1934), an associate of Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) in the invention of the telephone and in the early days of the Bell Telephone Company.<sup>1</sup> Watson started an engine works in East Braintree, Massachusetts, with a partner, Frank O. Wellington, which later began to build boats and then ships. Beginning in 1898, contracts with the U.S. government to build two destroyers and a lightship (the Massachusetts South Shore's first steel vessel) crowded the yard area, and finally a 3,000-ton cruiser contract forced a move in 1900 to Quincy, Massachusetts for adequate water for launching. As a condition for two battleship contracts, the U.S. Navy required that the yard incorporate as FRS&E in 1901. Construction and operation of the new yard was financed out of Watson's personal fortune, which was large but still inadequate. Financial difficulties dogged the company until its purchase by BSC in 1913. Money had to be raised in 1902 by a stock offering and loans under unfavorable conditions, and the company was unable to pay dividends. In 1903, new stockholders replaced Watson with retired Rear Admiral F. T. Bowles (1858-1927, a founder of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers), and Watson left in 1904.

Soon after BSC bought the yard in 1913, Joseph W. Powell (1877-1954) replaced Admiral Bowles as president, and in 1915 S. Wiley Wakeman (1876-1940) became general superintendent. Both came from other shipyards. BSC brought all its shipbuilding activities together into BETH in 1917, with Powell as vice president; Wakeman took charge at Fore River as general manager and later succeeded Powell.

Both World Wars, of course, loaded the yard with naval construction, and satellite yards were opened. A

yard in Squantum, Massachusetts built thirty-five destroyers between 1917 and 1919, and one in Hingham, Massachusetts produced 227 ships from 1942 to 1945. Labor problems, high costs, and low demand brought about sale of Fore River shipyard to General Dynamics in 1964, and the same problems caused its closing in 1986.

## THE COLLECTION

The Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation archival materials total forty-five bound volumes and fourteen boxes of loose papers — about fourteen cubic feet (see table 1). The materials fall into three categories: business, accounting, and technical. The business records total about three cubic feet; they pertain almost entirely to the two decades 1900-20, especially to the first five years, during which there were many corporate changes. Among the records are minutes of meetings of directors, stockholders, and executive committee; letter books of the president, treasurer, and secretary; president's bulletins, and manager's notices. There are also copies of a World War I house organ ("Fore River Log," 1915-20) and a book of newspaper clippings from 1918.

Accounting records (numerical financial data) are some 0.8 cubic feet, again all pre-1920. More than half are for Simpson's, mostly from 1857-96. There are 1902-4 financial statements for FRS&E and a little BETH material.

The largest part is technical, about ten cubic feet, mostly from 1902-1928. There are bidding (RFP) specifications and trial reports for U.S. Navy World War I destroyers and commercial ships and nine large bound volumes of detailed engineering calculations. A bonus is two bound volumes entitled "Dimensions of Steamers," which consist of specifications of ships built by John Roach and Sons from 1872 to 1907. They show ship and owner names, dates, and characteristics; for some there are detailed weights and costs, and even sometimes total costs vs. contract price. John Roach and his yard in Chester, Pennsylvania were important in the history of iron shipbuilding in the United States.

The following are some examples of BETH ships where the collection provides data:

**Trawlers:** Some data are available on the *Spray*, an early steel trawler (1905).

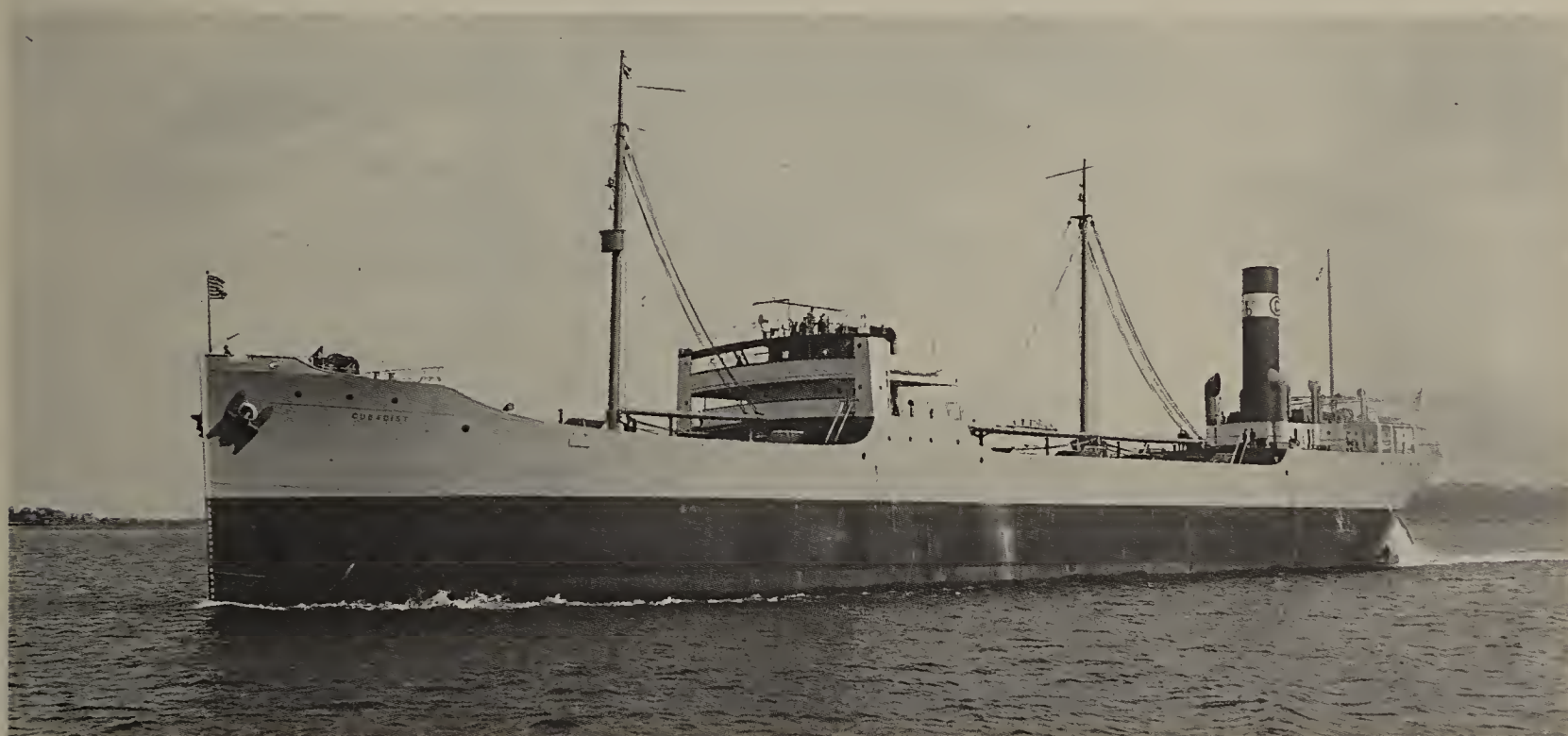
**Cruisers:** Around 1905, the navy ordered three cruisers for a comparative test of turbine power. During 1905-08 FRSb built the *Salem*, with Curtis turbines (FRSb contributed greatly to their development), and the *Birmingham*, with reciprocating engines. The third, the *Chester*, with Parsons turbines, was built by Bath Iron Works. HNC has machinery specifications for the *Birmingham* and material on the tests and turbines.

1. In addition to these engineering activities, Watson studied geology and literature at MIT (where he is listed with the class of 1894), acted in the English theater for a year, and painted (the MIT Museum has three of his pictures).





Examples of photographs available in the Bethlehem Steel Collection include the launching party of the *Spray*, 1905 (above) and the molasses tanker *Cubadist* at sea (below). Photos courtesy of the Hart Nautical Collections, MIT Museum.



**Destroyers:** BETH, including Squantum, built some seventy-five World War I destroyers, on all but two of which there is information, mostly specifications (fifty-seven) and trial or test reports (forty-five). There are also data on twenty-three non-BETH World War I destroyers.

**Molasses Tankers:** Specifications for three early bulk molasses carriers (1915-17), *Cubadist*, *Sucrosa*, and *Mielerio*. *Cubadist* and *Mielerio* broke up in service.

*Lexington:* Ordered as a battle cruiser, the *Lexington* was caught up by the Naval Limitation Treaty and completed as an early airplane carrier in 1925. HNC has specifications for two cruiser versions and one as carrier.

*Mariposa*, *Monterey*, and *Lurline:* In 1929-32, BETH built these passenger ships, which had long careers as liners and in cruising. HNC has specifications and some blueprints.





The first-class passenger lounge of the Bethlehem Steel Company's *Mariposa*, *Monterey*, or *Lurline*. Photo courtesy of the Hart Nautical Collections, MIT Museum.



Table 1  
Bethlehem Archival Gift by Lot Numbers

Lot #	Type	Dates	Co.	Notes	Form
18	Tec	1913	BETH+...	Blueprints - spare parts	L
36Aa-b	Tec	1928	BETH	Specs, Union Gulf, 2 copies	B
36Ac-f	Tec	1928	BETH	Specs, Union Gulf, 4 copies	B
36Ag	Tec	1872-87	JRoach	Dimensions of steamers	B M
36Ah	Tec	1891-1907	JRoach	"	B M
75a	Bus	1901-05	FRS&E	Minutes: directors, stockholders	B
75b	Bus	1904-14	FRSb	"	B
148	Tec	1906-40	FRSb+BETH	Plan lists	L
149	Tec	1933-40	BETH	Mold loft offsets	L
172a	Bus	1903-04	FRS&E	Treasurer's letter book	B
172b	Bus	1902-04	FRS&E	Secretary's letter book	B
172c	Bus	1904-05	FRS&E	" Ref to FRSb Co.	B
172d	Acc	1857-96	Simpson	Accounts	B M
172e	Bus	1903-04	FRS&E	Executive Committee records	B
172f	Bus	1901-06	FRS&E+FRSb	Manager's notices	B
172g	Bus	1903-13	FRS&E+FRSb	"	B
172h	Bus	1906-10	FRSb	"	B
172i	Bus	1910-14	FRSb	"	B
172j	Bus	1914-17	FRSb	"	B
172k	Bus	1916-19	FRSb+BETH	BETH, Mgr's notices; FRSb, Genl Supt	B
172l	Bus	1901-04	FRS&E+FRSb	President's bulletins, etc.	B
172m	Bus	1901	FRS&E+FRSb	"	B
172n	Bus	1903-13	FRS&E+FRSb	"	B
172o	Bus	1911-17	FRSb	"	B
172p	Bus	1918	BETH? BSC?	Clippings - Buffalo plant	B
181a	Acc	1873-78	Simpson	Accounts. See PR10a'90	B M
181b	Acc	1856-64	Simpson	"	B M
181c	Acc	1864-69	Simpson	"	B M
181d	Acc	1919-20	Simpson	Time book, hours worked	B
184	Acc	1902-04	FRS&E	Financial Statements	L
185a	Bus	1903-05	FRS&E+FRSb	President's letters	L
185b	Bus	1903-04	FRS&E	"	L
186a-f	Tec	1907-17	FRSb	Engineering calculations (6 vols)	B
186g-i	Tec	1917-28	BETH	Engineering calculations (3 vols)	B
195	Acc	1869-73	Simpson	Accounts. In PR10a'90	B
215a	Acc	1857-61	Simpson	Wages receipt book	B M
215b	Acc	1888	Simpson	Invoices & receipts	L M
267 BoxI	Tec	1907-22	FRSb, BETH	USN Trial Reports, etc.	L
267 BoxII	Tec	1905-21	FRSb, BETH	USN & foreign trial reports	L
267 BoxIII	Tec	1918-20	BETH	USN trial reports	L
267 BoxIV	Tec	1918-20	BETH	"	L
267 BoxV	Tec	1904-22	FRSb, BETH	Turbine data; trial reports	L
267 BoxVI	Tec	1908-17	FRSb ?	Machinery weights	L
PR10'90	A&B	1839-1957	Mixed	Account Book, Ship List. See 195 & 181	B L
PR11'90	T&A	1902-40	Mixed	Ship Specs. Card of Accounts. Job #s	B
PR12'90	T&B	1902-20	Mixed	Specs, magazines, plans	L B
PR13'90	Tec	1890-1927	Mixed	USN Specs, Ships & Machinery	B

Codes for "Form": Bound.....B Loose.....L Microfilm.....M



*Victor A. Lewinson is a volunteer at the Hart Nautical Collections of the MIT Museum. He spent thirty years in maritime freight transportation consulting and research. Kurt Hasselbalch is curator of the Hart Nautical Collections and has twelve years of museum curatorial experience.*



# News

## AT THE MUSEUMS

### Library of Congress Exhibits Dutch and Flemish Cartography

In recognition of the remarkable achievements of Dutch and Flemish explorers and cartographers between 1500 and 1800, the Library of Congress will exhibit a collection of books, maps, atlases, and prints from this period. "Leo Belgicus: The Dutch and Flemish World, 1500 - 1800" will be open in the James Madison Building of the Library through 15 May 1994.

### Cape Ann Rejuvenated

The Cape Ann Historical Museum has recently completed a multi-million dollar expansion and renovation project, increasing the size of the facility by 60 percent. New exhibits include works by artists who painted in the region, including Maurice Prendergast, Winslow Homer, Milton Avery, and Fitz Hugh Lane. The expansion also created space to reinstall the fisheries and maritime collections, featuring the boat used by Alfred "Centennial" Johnson to make the first documented solo Atlantic crossing in 1876, and Howard Blackburn's *Great Republic*. The museum is located in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

### Ship Models

The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia, announces the fourth scale ship model competition and exhibition to be held in the summer of 1995. The competition is open to professional and amateur model builders of all ages in three divisions: scratchbuilt, semi-scratchbuilt, and kit. Builders of sailing ships, powered ships, and small craft models are encouraged to enter. To obtain the official competition rules and entry form, write to Ship Model Competition, The Mariners' Museum, 100 Museum Drive, Newport News, VA 23606-3759.

In addition to the upcoming competition, the museum has opened an exhibit entitled "Ship Models: Why?" at Norfolk's Waterside Festival Marketplace. The exhibit of eighteen small models explores some of the reasons ship models are made.

## DISCOVERIES

### Rare Eighteenth-Century Ship's Spar Found

Archaeologists working on Derby Wharf at Salem Maritime National Historic Site have uncovered a rare ship's spar used as a bollard within the original wharf construction of 1764 - 1771. The bollard, for fastening mooring lines, was identified as a spar because it is eight-sided, and has a square tenon and a sheave hole with a three-foot-long wooden pin thrust through it. The spar is made of eastern white pine, measures 9.5 feet long, and retains many marks, scratches, and wear patterns attesting to its use. The artifact might have been used as a utility spar for a derrick on the wharf after its life as a spar on a seagoing vessel, and before it ended up as part of the wharf construction. The spar has been removed from the site to the University of Massachusetts Archaeological Services laboratory in Amherst, where it is undergoing continued study.

## SYMPOSIA

### Australian Archaeology

The Australian Institute for Maritime Archaeology will hold its thirteenth annual conference at the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, from 17-21 October 1994. The conference theme is "Discovery, migration, acculturation, exploitation, or . . . ? Reinterpreting seafaring activity within the Pacific Rim." The goal of the conference is to integrate maritime historians and anthropologists with a view toward defining where maritime archaeological evidence can contribute to new or revised interpretations of seafaring activity within the Pacific Rim. Expressions of interest in participation should be sent to Peter Gesner, Queensland Museum, PO Box 3300, South Brisbane 4101, Australia.

### Antique Motorboating

The Antique and Classic Boat Society will hold its next Antique Motorboat Symposium at The Mariners' Museum in 1995. The symposium will focus on the Chris-Craft Company and will feature hands-on demonstrations,



panel discussions, and presentations by boat restorers. More information about the symposium will be available later this year.

### **Museum Small Craft Association**

The 1994 annual meeting of the MSCA will take place from Friday to Sunday, 7-9 October 1994, at The Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia. The MSCA was established in 1987 to "uphold and promote the interest, programs, and activities of museums, other institutions, and individuals in furthering the understanding of the technical and social history of small craft." Call (804) 596-2222 for registration information.

### **World War II in the Pacific**

The Naval Historical Center, the American Society of Naval Engineers, the Naval Order of the United States, the Marine Corps Historical Center, and the U.S. Naval Institute will jointly sponsor a conference on the theme "World War II in the Pacific" on 10-12 August 1994 at the Crystal City Hyatt Regency in Arlington, Virginia. Focusing on the momentous Allied offensive campaign against the Empire of Japan from August 1942 to August 1945, the conference will feature the remembrances of veterans of the war, historical discussions, contemporary films, artifact displays, and book exhibits. Participants will have the opportunity to attend the U.S. Navy's *From the Sea Summer Pageant* and the Marine Corps' *Sunset Parade* and to tour the Navy and Marine Corps Museums. A stellar listing of speakers has been assembled for the event. For further information, contact Dr. William S. Dudley, Chair, Coordinating Committee, Naval Historical Center, Bldg. 57, Washington Navy Yard, 901 M Street SE, Washington, D.C. 20374-5060, or call (202) 433-7229 or FAX (202) 433-3593.

## **RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Bicentennial Award Competition**

To mark the bicentennial of USS *Constitution*, which was authorized in 1794, launched in 1797, and ordered on her first cruise in 1798, as well as the bicentennial of the establishment of the Department of the Navy (1798), the Naval Historical Center plans to make an award of \$750 for an article and an award of \$2,500 for a book related to a bicentennial theme and based on original research, published or accepted for publication between 1994 and 1998. Articles and books whose subjects relate to any

aspect of the history of USS *Constitution* in any time period, or to any aspect of the history of the Federal Navy, c. 1798-1801, are eligible.

Nominations should be made by 30 June 1998 and must include one copy of the article or book, or if the work is not yet in print, of the manuscript along with evidence that the work has been accepted for publication. Announcement of the awards will be in December 1998. Nominations should be made to Senior Historian, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, 901 M Street SE, Washington, D.C. 20374-5060.

### **Internships Available at NHC**

The Naval Historical Center welcomes internship applications from undergraduate history majors who wish to spend up to four weeks engaged in applied history projects in the Washington Navy Yard. Limited funds are available to support living expenses. Historical research, archival, museum, and curatorial assignments are available. Applications should be filed at least two months before the desired beginning date of the internship.

Application forms for the research grant, pre-doctoral fellowship, and internships may be obtained by writing to Senior Historian, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, 901 M Street SE, Washington, D.C. 20374-5060.

### **Los Angeles Maritime Research Group**

A maritime history research group has been formed under the auspices of the Los Angeles Maritime Museum in San Pedro, California. The purpose is to provide a forum for advanced and beginning researchers to exchange information, ideas, and sources. Research results will be disseminated to the community at large through the museum's existing educational media. Those interested should contact the Los Angeles Maritime Museum, Berth 84, Foot of Sixth Street, San Pedro, CA 90731.

### **Exxon Valdez Resource**

An extensive collection of news clippings about the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill is now available in the research library at The Mariners' Museum. The 8,000 news clippings come from various Alaska newspapers and are bound into fifty-five volumes arranged chronologically. Interested parties may contact the library, which is adjacent to the museum, at (804) 596-2222.



## Book Reviews

H. W. DICK AND S. A. KENTWELL, *Beancaker to Boxboat: Steamship Companies in Chinese Waters* (Scullin, Australia: The Nautical Association of Australia, 1988). xiv + 329 pages. ISBN 0959907939. \$A50; *Sold East: Traders, Tramps and Tugs of Chinese Waters* (Melbourne: The Nautical Association of Australia, 1991). xiv + 338 pages. ISBN 0959907947. \$A55.

The rather skimpy literature of merchant shipping in the Far East has been enhanced considerably by the recent work of two Australian authors, Howard W. Dick and Stephen A. Kentwell. Writing from the perspectives of an economic historian and a foreign service officer, respectively, this pair has produced two handsome books published during the past five years by the Nautical Association of Australia.

The first, *Beancakers to Boxboats*, describes the fleets of the major shipping firms in Chinese waters during the age of steam. Included among the British firms are the two giants, Jardine Matheson and Butterfield & Swire, along with Douglas Steamship and Hong Kong, Canton, and Macao Steamboat. The book also discusses two Chinese shipping companies, China Merchants Steam Navigation Company and the C. Y. Tung group, as well as one Japanese firm, NKK. Missing — perhaps because of the relative brevity of their tenure in China — are the American firms, the Dollar Line and Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company, as well as the merchant fleets of various European nations and those of other Chinese firms. Also missing, because, as co-author Dick acknowledges, it did not occur to them that they should be included, are the tanker fleets of Standard Oil and Asiatic Petroleum (Royal Dutch).

The second volume, *Sold East*, is accurately subtitled *Traders, Tramps, and Tugs of Chinese Waters*. This book fills some of the gaps in the first volume, particularly with the inclusion of the Moller and Wallem coasting fleets and those of several other European firms. It also describes San Peh, one of the largest privately-owned Chinese firms, and the two present descendants, one on Taiwan and the other on the mainland, of the old China Merchants fleet.

It omits, however, the Ming Sung Industrial Company, the fleet owned by Szechwan warlords that had acquired considerable tonnage before World War II.

An earlier volume by the same authors, *Far Eastern Fleets*, was published by the Nautical Association in 1973, but this reviewer has not seen a copy and cannot attest to its contents. Nor has he seen Professor Dick's 1987 book, *The Indonesian Inter-Island Shipping Industry*. The two books reviewed here, however, use the same format: a paragraph devoted to the history of each vessel in the company's fleet in terms of gross tonnage, origin and demise, changes of ownership, and any major incidents affecting the vessel. The data appear to be remarkably authoritative, considering the disruption and dispersal of source material caused by the impact of war in the Far East. Both volumes are well illustrated, with *Beancakers* having well over two hundred photographs and *Sold East* over one hundred.

Dick and Kentwell have made an important contribution to the literature of merchant shipping in the Far East with the two recent books reviewed here. Their methodology provides a highly useful way in which to examine the total history and significance of a shipping firm in a particular trade, and the data they utilize in describing the various shipping ventures are of considerable value to ship buffs as well as economic historians.

Acquiring books published abroad is always a problem, and Australian books are no exception. These two books sell for about \$45 each (U.S.) and can be ordered from the publisher (G.P.O. Box 4114, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001, Australia) or from major booksellers in Sydney or Melbourne. Credit card purchases are the simplest way to avoid the problems of currency exchange, but buyers should be prepared for a surprise on the shipping costs when the statement comes. Australian postage is exorbitant, and the surface mail from there to the United States seems to take as long today as it did in the days of sailing ships — at least three months. The patient buyer, however, will be well rewarded in acquiring these books.

DAVID H. GROVER

Napa, California



JOHN DUNMORE, *Who's Who in Pacific Navigation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991). Cloth, xvi + 312 pages, bibliography, index. ISBN 0824813-502. \$34.00.

In conceptualization, a biographical dictionary often accurately represents the special research interests and approaches of its author. Confronting the truly daunting task of selecting navigators from more than four centuries of Pacific Ocean exploration, John Dunmore argues that while the leaders of expeditions should hold a central place, other participants such as outstanding subordinate officers, scientists, artists, and ethnographers deserved biographical recognition. Adopting this approach, Dunmore has selected the British, French, Dutch, American, Russian, and Spanish navigators, excluding most Portuguese navigators and devoting less space to European explorations of the Asian coasts. The Melanesians, Micronesians, and Polynesians receive attention in the introduction for their remarkable although anonymous voyages, but little mention is made of the Chinese, beyond the semimythical Hsü Fu, and the Japanese, except for Ichizaemon Shimaya, who explored the Bonin Islands in 1675. The only indigenous American navigator selected for a biography is the shadowy figure Tupac Inca Yupanqui, reported by some sixteenth-century Spanish sources to have sailed west from Peru in the 1480s with a fleet of balsa rafts to conquer rich islands and to return with gold and black slaves. Rather than including this unlikely entry, the author might have added the remarkable biographies of better-known Japanese sea drifter navigators whose voyages in disabled junks by way of the Kuroshio and North Equatorial Currents carried them to Kamchatka and North America.

Although it is comprehensive, the prime concern of the dictionary is the Southwest Pacific, including Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific Islands. As might be expected from his previous research, Dunmore's best biographies are those of French and British navigators from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Often, however, the personal idiosyncrasies, eccentricities, and negative factors that affected many navigators are left out of the dictionary entries to produce somewhat sanitized biographies. When recounting, for example, the arrest of the British navigator James Colnett by the Spaniards in 1789 at Nootka Sound, Dunmore makes no mention of the fact that the expedition carried Chinese artisans, that the mission aimed to set up a fortified port on the Northwest Coast to challenge Spanish sovereignty, or that the commander exhibited severe mental instability following his capture. Nevertheless, Dunmore presents accurate sketches examining the career highlights of major figures and their Pacific navigations. In an effort to achieve

gender balance of a sort, the author has included biographies of the French cross-dresser Jeanne Baret, who sailed as a man with Bougainville until discovered by the Tahitians, and the haughty Ysabel de Barreto, who in 1595 accompanied her husband Alvaro de Mendaña from Peru. There is also mention in her husband's biography of Mrs. Francis Barkley, who was the first recorded European woman on the Northwest Coast.

Unfortunately, given their role in Pacific navigation and sovereignty, the Spaniards receive uneven treatment. Perhaps the most significant oversight is the exclusion of the explorer of the California coast, Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, who sailed from Mexico in 1542-43 with Bartolomé Ferrello as his chief pilot, reached as far north as the present Oregon border, sighted the Farallon Islands, and explored the port of San Diego. Cabrillo is well known in the United States today, and the omission of his biography leaves a definite lacuna. Although Dunmore states that by the mid-eighteenth century "Spain had ceased to count" (p.xiv), in fact the Spanish navigators continued to make major contributions and discoveries. It is remarkable that Bruno de Hezeta, Ignacio de Arteaga, Francisco de Eliza, Mariano Moziño, José Bustamante y Guerra, Gonzalo López de Haro, Cayetano Valdés, and other late eighteenth-century Spanish navigators and scientists do not merit biographical entries. They fit Dunmore's criteria of leading expeditions or of making major discoveries that in many cases were comparable with or exceeded the contributions of French and British navigators who received biographies.

While any specialist in Pacific history might propose additional entries from a particular research area, there are definite imbalances in the volume. Each great region of the Pacific produced characters similar to William Henry (Bully) Hayes who suffered prison for debt in Australia around 1860, joined a vaudeville troupe, and during the 1860s and 1870s developed great expertise as a navigator in the waters of New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, where he traded guns and alcohol. While the inclusion of such characters in the dictionary is not necessarily negative, it appears that Dunmore experienced difficulty deciding exactly when to conclude the study. If Hayes deserves an entry, then one could propose numerous nineteenth-century fur traders, whalers and sealers, coastal merchants, smugglers, and missionaries of the American and Asian coasts who also made discoveries. With the termination of Spanish sovereignty in the Americas, Chile, Peru, Mexico, and other new nations dispatched navigators to explore such areas as Punta Arenas, the Strait of Magellan, and Pacific islands. In the 1870s while Hayes traded among the islands, navigators such as Francisco Sánchez Alvarado of Chile sailed to Easter Island and Lindo Pérez Gacitua visited Tahiti on naval training



missions that also made hydrographic contributions. In the case of the Russians, Dunmore includes the 1886 expedition commanded by Stephen Osipovich Makarov aboard the corvette *Vitiaz*, but by that date there were many other similar expeditions of different nations that would require additional biographies.

Notwithstanding these quibbles and the fact that the University of Hawaii Press did not include maps for easy reference, Dunmore's dictionary provides Pacific Ocean historians with a handy reference work that will take its place in the libraries of specialists and general readers.

CHRISTON I. ARCHER

University of Calgary

I. G. STEWART, *Liberty Ships in Peacetime* (Rockingham Beach, Western Australia: Ian Stewart Publications, 1992). 322 pages, illustrations, indexes, tables, appendices, bibliography. \$65.00 plus \$2.00 shipping. ISBN 0646059874.

The fascination with the Liberty Ship of World War II seems to increase as the years go by. Two notable books on the subject were published in 1970 and 1972. The first, Sawyer and Mitchell's *Liberty Ships*, used as its format a series of ship lists based upon the various yards where the ships were constructed. The Sawyer and Mitchell listings include brief biosketches of each vessel's wartime record and its subsequent disposition, carried through to 1970. The second work, Bunker's *Liberty Ships — The Ugly Ducklings of World War II*, carries the reader through the Liberty building program and then discusses the record of the Liberty Ships within each of the wartime theaters. The newest contribution to the story of the Liberty Ship is appropriately titled *Liberty Ships in Peacetime*, and the amount of data included in the book represents an inordinate amount of time and great effort on the part of the author, I. G. Stewart.

The text portion of Stewart's book covers the initial concept for the Liberty class, which was first a British design that resulted in the "Ocean" series — sixty ships which were built in American yards to British specifications. The British design was later modified to suit American requirements, and the Liberty Ship was born. In all, 2,710 Libertys were launched. Having given the reader some background in the development of the Liberty and its construction, Stewart next provides a number of lists giving biosketches of the Libertys arranged under various designations. These lists are an improvement over the work of Sawyer and Mitchell in that Stewart's ship bios give far more detail. In addition to serving the primary purpose of giving the history of each ship, the lists allow the reader an intriguing look at the world's ocean trade as

it was carried on during the 1950s and the 1960s. Stewart explains, for instance, that the *Jerome K. Jones* first went out of U.S. registry in 1947 to go over to the Norwegian flag under the name *Vindafford*, then in 1951 she went to the Liberian flag under the name *Gladiator*. In 1960 she went under the Yugoslavian flag with the name *Solta*, holding her Yugoslavian name and registry until 1968 when she was reflagged to Cypress and renamed *Panaghia Kykkou*. During her postwar trading years, ex-*Jerome K. Jones* stranded twice. She was scrapped in 1972.

In a separate register, Stewart lists shipowners and/or managers in a format of value to individuals interested in the makeup of the industry as well as in specific ships. Many of the Libertys that went into commercial service following 1945 saw modifications to their superstructures or engines or both. Some were also radically changed in hull configuration, divorcing their appearance from the classic Liberty Ship profile, and Stewart's lists include these changes as well. The book's 399 photographs — all of Libertys, and most showing the ships in their postwar configurations — are welcome additions.

It is tragic, however, that Stewart did not avail himself of some professional guidance regarding the book's format. It is also regrettable that more careful editing was not performed before the book went into its final draft. Consequently, what could have been a classic contribution to maritime history is rather seriously flawed. The careless approach taken by Stewart toward basic historic facts is disturbing. For instance, he exhibits a hazy knowledge of the war's military and economic history when he states on page 1 that: "The deal represented some \$U.S. 96 million and was to be paid for in cash under the 'cash and carry' arrangements which Britain had with the United States prior to the latter's entry into the war, and the introduction of the Lend Lease agreement." Stewart is, of course, correct in stating that the "Ocean" class freighters build for the British during 1941 in American yards were first paid for in cash. He is wrong, though, when he implies that the Lend Lease program did not begin until after the U.S. entry into the war. The fact is that the Lend Lease bill was signed into law by President Roosevelt in March 1941, some nine months before the U.S. entered World War II. Stewart errs again on page 6 — this time rather badly — when he states that "On November 13, [1941], America's Neutrality Law was finally amended, so American merchant ships could be armed to protect themselves against *German submarines already marauding the Atlantic East Coast of the U.S. and Gulf of Mexico*" (emphasis added by reviewer). Although American ships had certainly been attacked by submarines elsewhere on the oceans, there were no marauding submarine attacks against any shipping immediately off the U.S. east coast or in the Gulf of Mexico prior to January of 1942.



Taken as a whole, *Liberty Ships in Peacetime* is a frustrating book with which to work. Once the reader leaves the book's first seven sections of narrative text and starts into the lists, the challenge begins. The ship biography lists are in part a puzzlement, and the mini-glossaries found in various sections are sometimes incomplete, the result being that the significance of a particular item of information is regrettably lost. Finally, the arrangement of the indexes is unnecessarily confusing, and errors strewn throughout exacerbate these problems. On page 82, for example, Stewart states that "of the 910 Liberty Ships which traded commercially after World War II, 665 or 73 percent continued to do so for many years until eventually broken up." Yet when one tallies Stewart's ship biographies, one finds that he has listed 968. Another fault is that the tallies given in some of the author's tables do not agree with the 968 ship biographies. Stewart may have his own underlying reasons for this, but if that is the case, he neglects to inform his readers as to why.

Problems like these can be overlooked provided one has a means by which to authenticate the remainder of a given work. However, since *Liberty Ships in Peacetime* does not cite specific sources through the use of footnotes or reference notes, either in the text or accompanying the ship biographies, one is forced to proceed on blind faith. This is a great deal to ask of a reader when all Stewart provides is a very generalized and sketchy (title and author only) reference section.

Despite its errors and shortcomings, *Liberty Ships in Peacetime* should not be overlooked by those who wish to know about the postwar Liberty Ship fleet or of the general world maritime trade as it existed during the 1950s and 1960s. The photographs alone make it an interesting and worthwhile volume. But as a reference tool for use by the serious student, too much of the book is suspect to recommend *carte blanche* utilization.

CHARLES DANA GIBSON

Camden, Maine

PETER PLOWMAN, *The Wheels Still Turn, A History of Australian Paddleboats* (Kenthurst, Australia: Kangaroo Press, 1992). 8" x 11½", hard cover, 157 pages, many black-and-white photos, 39 color plates, line drawings, bibliography, index.

"Paddleboats played a major role in the development of this country, yet they are almost totally overlooked today when Australian maritime history is discussed," says Peter Plowman as he begins his detailed history of the development of Australian paddlewheel steamers.

Later Plowman observes that nearly three hundred paddleboats were built over a seventy-year period for the Murray River traffic. He adds ruefully that, when this era ended, a large number of the ships were run aground along the river to rot and die in an area called "Rotten Row." But paddleboats still exist in Australia, most of them sight-seeing or excursion ships, much like those that sail along the Mississippi River in this country.

In many such ships, diesel power has replaced steam. Some of the paddleships don't move at all; they have become attractive houseboats along the rivers. Moreover, there is a healthy attempt to restore and preserve some of the old paddlewheel steamers, an indication that the historic significance of old paddlewheelers is not lost on everyone. The ships that have survived are symbols of their very important role in the development of Australia.

In Australia's frontier days, as elsewhere, finding and exploring a new land was done by sea. Australia was fortunate to have large rivers around which cities developed, but the valuable farmland in the interior awaited development. Roads were non-existent, yet these valuable undeveloped areas could be reached by boat. Rowboats? Sailboats? Both were too slow and the distances too great, but a powerboat was ideal.

Meanwhile, back in New York, Robert Fulton was hard at work. The adaptation of steam power to propel a wooden hull was as important to Australia as it was to the United States or Britain or France. Steam engines had been used initially to power pumps for keeping mines dry or to pump out drydocks, but as engines became smaller and more efficient they were soon used in boats. Fulton's *Clermont* made her historic trip to Albany in 1807, and two years later the *Phoenix* went from New York to Philadelphia under steam power.

It was not until 1831, however, that the first Australian-built steamer went into service at Sydney on the Parramatta River. This inaugurated paddleboat service on various Australian rivers, as boats were built there or imported from Britain, sometimes in sections, and assembled in Australia. Paddleboats became critically important in land development, and they continued their vital role until the end of the 1800s.

Plowman's book makes some minor errors with Australian nautical language. A snagging boat, for instance, had but one job to do: clear a river, previously undisturbed by power boats, of snags, such as huge trees that had fallen into the river, or to find any natural obstruction such as rocks. The work was particularly important on the Murray River, where competition for lucrative ship service was fierce. The first snagging boat was an eighty-footer, appropriately named the *Grappler*.

Another important class of ships was the "hawking boats," which were floating stores selling supplies to



riverfront communities. As might be expected, the local store owners ashore were not enthusiastic about their floating competition. The hawking boats ran on schedule, so if a settler needed another rubbish barrel, he had a fairly accurate idea as to when the boat would be visiting.

No review of a book that mentions hawking boats would be complete without a word about Randell and Cadell, two businessmen whose rivalry for domination of the Murray River did much to help develop the region. William Richard Randell is honored by a cairn at Mannum hailing him as the "first steam navigator on the River Murray." Another cairn at Cadell has a plaque honoring Captain Francis Cadell, for whom the town is named. The words read: "He was the outstanding pioneer of Murray steam navigation." Both men earned their honors.

Paddleboats for commercial purposes served Australia well, and today paddleboats serve as excursion ships and cruise boats. Some have survived as yachts and others have been saved as memorials to an era long gone. But if the *Murray Princess*, the largest vessel to operate on the Murray, sailed the Mississippi, she would look completely at home. On the other hand, the fine old *Maid of Sker* sits proudly on the grass in a public park in Nerang.

Plowman's book, based on his ten-year interest in paddleboats, fills an important gap in global ship history. It serves the same purpose that Carl D. Lane's *American Paddle Steamboats* did in the United States back in 1943.

JOHN R. HERBERT

Spring Hill, Florida

ROBIN FISHER, *Vancouver's Voyage: Charting the Northwest Coast, 1791-1795* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1992). Cloth, xii + 131 pages, notes, maps, illustrations, references, photographs by Gary Fieghen. ISBN 1550540238. \$35.00.

In the final decade of the eighteenth century, surveying parties from Spain and England spent several years mapping the northwest coastline of North America in an attempt to reach a settlement of conflicting claims. The Spanish had been at it off and on for two centuries and more, but the recent arrival of English, Russian, and French ships convinced the government in Madrid of the need for conclusive action. An international incident at Nootka Sound in 1789 led to the dispatch of negotiators to survey the coast and arrive at a final settlement. Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra led the Spanish delegation; the English commander was George Vancouver. The men did not arrive at a settlement, but further negotiations in Europe made that unnecessary. Everyone simply agreed to disagree and left the problem for future diplomats.

Robin Fisher has based his work on the recent definitive edition of Vancouver's *Voyage of Discovery*, edited by W. Kaye Lamb and published by the Hakluyt Society. In a six-by-nine-inch multivolume format, with an accompanying atlas, that report is fine for specialists but less satisfactory for general readers. Professor Fisher has woven this material into a fascinating account of what he calls "the clash between British commerce and Spanish imperialism" (p. 12). Salted in here and there are occasional guesses about attitudes of "indigenous people" (p. 9) to the "white man's game" (p. 49) and "the agenda of Europeans" (p. 120). Occasional lapses of this sort only serve to increase the general reading pleasure. To tell the truth, the narrative is unusually clear and crisp.

And it is a pleasure, a feast for the eyes. The original maps and drawings are reproduced with unexpected clarity. Much of the detail on the greatly reduced Vancouver maps can be read with a magnifying glass. The color plates alone are worth the price of the book, the next best thing to being there. The page layout and general book design deserve some sort of prize. They're very good. The stunning cover illustrations are printed on paper that seems heavy enough to last for a good, long time on most bookshelves.

HARRY KELSEY

The Huntington Library

GLYNN BARRATT, *Russia and the South Pacific 1696-1840, Vol. 4, The Tuamotu Islands and Tahiti* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1992). 298 pages, maps, tables, illustrations, bibliography, index, endnotes, appendix. ISBN 0774804092.

This is Glynn Barratt's fourth and final volume of his series on Russian naval exploration in the Pacific, which in turn is part of the University of British Columbia's Pacific Maritime Studies Series. A professor of Russian at Carleton University who has done a great deal to make Russian naval accomplishments accessible to those who do not read cyrillic, Dr. Barratt may perhaps be excused for his enthusiasm when he says, "The Russian hydrographic record in Central Polynesia in the post-Napoleonic era (1816-26) is a proud one, equal to that of the British and superior to that of the United States and France" (p. 3). He also argues that these Russian sources were "left by trained, objective men," whose contributions are "largely ignored throughout the West" (p. xvii). Although Russian journals in translation, notably through the Hakluyt Society publications, have already been of great help to students of the Pacific, Barratt's efforts will further enrich the English-language literature on exploration.



One obvious advantage to Barratt's work is that it collates the writings of Russian explorers by island group, rather than by voyage, so that area specialists can more readily examine the material relevant to their needs instead of having to look through multiple volumes of individual transpacific journals. The first three volumes of this series dealt with Russian visits to Australia, Melanesia, and other parts of Polynesia, but this volume focuses on the Tuamotu atolls and Tahiti. The author deals with each separately, with an overview of the voyages, translated excerpts from the Russian texts, and an analysis of their contributions to science. There is also a three-page appendix that lists the thirty-one atolls of the Tuamotus sighted by Russian ships between 1816 and 1824 and the ten Russian ships that visited Tahiti between 1820 and 1839. Barratt correlates Russian sightings with those of previous ships, and he shows that the Russian explorers themselves had carefully studied the published data available to them. In fact, Ivan von Kruzenshtern, himself a circumnavigator (1803-6) who had visited the Marquesas and Hawaii, inspired these Russian scientific expeditions and compiled their findings in his *Atlas of the South Pacific Ocean* (1823-26). Barratt also includes relevant voyages around Cape Horn to the North Pacific that were sponsored by the Russian American Company.

The contribution of these Russian explorations to our knowledge of the South Pacific, despite the relative lateness of their quest for "discoveries," is significant, because their information is less directly tainted by commercial, evangelical, or colonial aspirations than that of other writers of the day. Moreover, scientific techniques had improved since the better-known English and French expeditions of the late eighteenth century, and "ample time had passed for the Rousseauesque approach toward the South Sea (as paradise) to have faded . . ." (p. 28). Yet the Russians were not without their biases. Most notable was Otto von Kotzebue's attack on the influence of English Protestants in Tahiti in 1824: "The religion taught by the missionaries is not true Christianity . . . the eternal repetition of prescribed prayers, which forbids every innocent pleasure, and cramps or annihilates every mental power, is a libel on the Divine Founder . . ." (p. 122). This diatribe invited a rebuttal from the London Missionary Society, which in consequence greatly expanded the English market for Kotzebue's writings.

Nor were the Russians unconcerned with national prestige or global strategy in their search for geographic revelations. The search for a northwest passage continued, and Kotzebue's first expedition (1815-18) provoked the British Admiralty to send more British vessels into Arctic waters, which in turn inspired Russia to dispatch additional exploring ships to the North Pacific and Captain Faddei von Bellingshausen (1819-21) toward Antarctica. Russian

fur trading had crept down the California coast to Fort Rose and had even produced an ill-fated imperial adventure in the Hawaiian islands by 1816, and the legal principle of "right of discovery" was still very negotiable in a Pacific where most formal colonies were declared after 1840. In fact, the Czar's ukases of 1821, which tried to annex most of the North Pacific and adjacent coasts down to 51°N, started a controversy that ended in the Monroe Doctrine in 1823. Moreover, Russian captains did not spare their sarcasm at the hydrography of earlier explorers or hesitate to engage in the all-too-common practice of renaming islands after their own mentors.

Nevertheless, these accounts, and Barratt's meticulous analysis, offer useful insights. The data on the Tuamotu atolls is mostly hydrographic in nature, since the Russians landed on only six of thirty-one islands and had friendly encounters with natives on only two. Tuamotuans were normally hostile toward intruders, and the Russians, for their part, believed that demonstrating their firepower ensured peace: "respect verging on fear was the guarantee of amicable dealings" (p. 18). Barratt calls Russian naval surveys of the Tuamotus their "brightest page of all" (p. 3). Not only were old maps improved upon, but seven islands, such as Angatau, were previously unknown to Europeans and could thus be called "a genuine discovery" (p. 17). By contrast, Russian hydrographic data on Tahiti was minor in value, because the island had already been visited so often by others, and even their ethnographic reporting came after missionization. Yet apart from Kotzebue, the Russian accounts of Tahiti are understated in their treatment of Reverend Henry Nott, chief advisor to Pomare II, and their observations are helpful in documenting transformations in Tahitian life. Rousseauesque continuities are also evident, as when Tahitians helped a Russian crew in its work for three days but wept bitterly when offered gifts in payment. "Forgive me innocent Tahitians," Aleksei Lazarev wrote, "I did not know you and judged you by the European standard."

DAVID A. CHAPPELL

University of Hawaii

DOUGLAS L. STEIN, *American Maritime Documents 1776-1860* (Mystic, CT: Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., 1992). 8½" x 11", paper, 159 pages, 120 illustrations of documents, appendix, bibliography. ISBN 091337-2625. \$20.00.

For a volume "intended as a reference tool for students, educators, manuscripts dealers and collectors, librarians, archivists, curators, and anyone else who may require a better understanding of maritime documents"



(p. 12), this is potentially a very useful item for a wide variety of users. The author notes in his introduction, however, that he did not include examples of every type of document used in the maritime industry between 1776 and 1860. Two very broad areas of the American maritime industry omitted completely are the Great Lakes and the rivers. In fact, the author does not mention that there was shipping on those waters. Even if the documents used on the Great Lakes and the rivers were identical to those used in deep water and coastal shipping, it would have been good to have the existence of that inland maritime industry recognized. Perhaps the absence of such documents in east coast repositories led to the failure to acknowledge the maritime industry on the Great Lakes and the rivers.

Beginning with documents issued in 1776 is quite logical, as that is the year in which America declared its independence. The only potential reason given for stopping in 1860 is the hint that by that date a complete system of federal legislation had been passed to regulate and protect American maritime commerce. That may be true up to a point, but there was significant legislation passed even in the twentieth century. Perhaps the period 1861 to the present can someday be treated in a second volume. This would permit the inclusion of any extant Confederate documents.

The 120 documents illustrated and described are in forty-two broad categories listed alphabetically from "Abstract Log" through "Whalemen's Shipping Papers." About half of the documents were issued by the U.S. Customs Service and the U.S. Consular Service. The remaining ones are business documents. "Documents" has been defined broadly enough so that items such as a clipper ship sailing card, a contribution certificate for the missionary packet *Morning Star*, and a membership certificate in the Boston Marine Society could be included.

The author describes each of the forty-two broad categories of documents and, within those categories, describes and illustrates each of the 120 documents individually. Some documents are shown in full size while others are reduced in order to fit them onto a single page. Where it seemed necessary, the author provided the standard size for documents, especially the large ones which were reduced in size. The name of the broad category is printed at the top of each page. Descriptions of individual documents are printed in italics while descriptions of broad categories are printed in regular Baskerville. As a general rule the descriptions are sufficiently detailed so that those groups identified as potential beneficiaries of this volume should be able to distinguish easily one document from another or to recognize the intent or purpose of each one. In the description of "Sailing Orders," the author might have said that one can sometimes learn a great deal about the nature, character, and

business acumen of the owner/managing owner of the vessel by reading his instructions to his captains. This is clearly evident in the letters that Charles W. Morgan, the New Bedford whaleship owner, wrote over many years.

There are two additional individual documents that should have been included in this volume. The first is a ticket on one of the more than seven hundred vessels which sailed around Cape Horn to California in 1849. Admittedly, these items are quite rare today, but in 1849 there were certainly many thousands of them. One such ticket has the weekly bill of fare promised to the passengers printed on the back, which makes it a valuable research document as well as an interesting curiosity. The other type document could not be reproduced in its entirety because of the number of pages, but it would have been interesting to have included a couple of pages from one of the whaling outfitting books produced by various New Bedford merchants. Owners or captains merely recorded the quantity of any of the great variety of supplies offered to departing whaling vessels. Quite a number of these documents exist from the many thousands that were undoubtedly used during much of the nineteenth century.

Four of the documents illustrated are reported to have come from the Rhode Island Historical Society and three from the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. Presumably the other 113 are from the G. W. Blunt White Library at Mystic Seaport. Possibly the author can remember where each of those 113 documents can be found among the many thousands in his collections, but for future staff and researchers it would have been helpful to have identified the individual collections from which those documents were chosen. The same is true for the seven obtained from other institutions. An appendix in which selected U.S. statutes relating to regulating American shipping are listed in chronological order and a selected bibliography of sources for further study of documents are useful sections of the volume.

Although a number of grammatical and punctuation errors and inconsistencies slightly mar this otherwise attractive and useful volume, anyone who administers a collection of maritime records, buys and sells them, or does serious research in maritime history ought to own a copy of it, and every library which holds American maritime documents ought to also have a copy for its staff and users. Perhaps either the author of this volume or some other industrious person will undertake the task of producing a volume of documents used between 1861 and the present and a volume of documents used in Great Lakes and river shipping.

CHARLES R. SCHULTZ

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BENJAMIN MENDLOWITZ AND MAYNARD BRAY, *The Book of Wooden Boats* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc. 1992). 11" x 11", cloth, 190 pages, frontispiece and 158 color photographs by Benjamin Mendlowitz, introduction and text by Maynard Bray, foreword by Peter Specter. ISBN 0393034178. \$50.00 U.S., \$63.00 Canada.

This is a beautiful coffee table book, obviously planned for the gift market, but one which is nonetheless a collection of very fine marine art.

Throughout history artists have been fascinated by ships and boats, whose form, generated for compatibility with their animate liquid element, presented a new pleasing view with each change of attitude. This is particularly true in the case of sailing vessels, which come close to kinship with living creatures. Those who took ships to sea were pleased to decorate their homes with portraits of them, and the more artful of these were also admired by landsman. Benjamin Mendlowitz has continued this fine tradition with his camera.

Mendlowitz achieved his popularity with the rise in interest in wooden boats, but there is no doubt that his work has contributed greatly toward sustaining this interest. Mass-produced synthetic boats, loaded with expensive non-essential gadgetry, reflect today's popular goal of total pleasure, uncontaminated by effort. This has resulted in a proliferation of boats operated by persons unwilling to master the skills that were once considered essential to navigation. A true sailor is never totally satisfied with his vessel and is constantly trying to improve her habitability and performance. To such a sailor there is nothing more satisfying than to gaze in the spring upon a newly painted and outfitted craft, ready for sea, and displaying the result of his skilled effort.

Wooden boats are associated with individuality. Wooden racing boats, mostly small, were sometimes produced in quantity, but after a few years of service even these developed personal characteristics obvious to sailors. Up through the early 1940s boating publications displayed plans from the drawing boards of many designers and representing boats largely built one-of-a-kind.

Wooden ships and boats disappeared slowly. Tug-boatmen felt that the resilience of a wooden hull prevented permanent deformation and fracturing of the structure when working between barges or in ice. Commercial fishermen thought that a metal hull frightened fish. Coasting sailors know that a wooden schooner, in spite of having no watertight compartmentation, would not sink when in the light condition or when laden with lumber. Most with a few years experience had survived at least one "water-logging." Seamen liked the solid, non-slip feel of a wooden deck, and even after most large vessels were

built with iron or steel hulls, their decks were of wood.

Benjamin Mendlowitz is an artist who uses his camera to extract from nature every bit of its beauty. His skill in posing, composition, and timing to cooperate with nature's moods makes each of his pictures a masterpiece. The boat types illustrated cover a wide range: sailboats, powerboats, working boats, open boats, and sailing yachts, the latter differing from sailboats in their larger size.

This reviewer is not competent to criticize the photography from a technical standpoint but feels confident that those who have that expertise would recognize Mendlowitz as an outstanding practitioner. A good example of his skill in blending boat and weather appears in the two portraits of the sandbagger *Puffin*, first in the frontispiece and then on page 126. In the first we see the white sails silhouetted brilliantly against dark sky and water; in the latter her dark sails, in the same position as in the first portrait, stand out against a brilliant evening sky and sun-tinted water. It is evident that Mendlowitz relies on a wide selection of lenses and filters, but always in ways that enhance the subject and never create an unnatural effect.

EDWARD N. BROWNLEE

Mount Holly, New Jersey

COLIN S. GRAY, *The Leverage of Sea Power: The Strategic Advantage of Navies in War* (New York: The Free Press, 1992). xii + 372 pages, maps, bibliography, index. ISBN 0029126614. \$24.95.

"Superior sea power," concludes strategy pundit Colin Gray, "exerts leverage by its ability to enlist time as a critical ally and by its invaluable capacity to shape the geostrategic terms of engagement in war" (p. 289). By war he means general conflicts between major maritime and continental powers in ten selected case studies. In a prologue and three chapters devoted to theory, six chapters to historical details of his ten examples, and one to a brief summation, Gray covers fundamentals of strategic uses of navies in war while extracting "a framework for policy, strategic and operational choices" (p. 32) and "a useful basket" or "repertoire" of strategic possibilities (p. 31) — in general, six such possibilities for true maritime powers and eight for continental states. He is at pains to insist, correctly, that no one strategy or strategic mix has worked in all cases and that navies and armies must always work synergistically (an overworked word, by the way).

Admitting a bias toward "Anglo-American strategic culture and a large measure of Eurocentricity" (pp. x-xi), Gray follows his own British upbringing by concentrating on open-ocean navies and worldwide wars. He treats World War I, and World War II in the Atlantic, very well



indeed but with too much attention to the land campaigns of the Germans. In addition to chapters on these two conflicts, one on the interwar period, and one on the Cold War, the other seven case studies are squeezed into two chapters: for the age of galleys, ancient Persia against the Greeks, the Peloponnesian War, Rome versus Carthage, the wars of the Byzantine Empire, and those of the Venetian republic; for the age of sail, England against Spain and the Anglo-French wars. His disparate emphasis on the twentieth century leads him into difficulty in identifying the true maritime "sea powers." On the one hand, Athens, the Byzantines, and Venice are lumped together with Rome and the Ottoman Empire as having had only "a coastal, narrow-sea character" (p. 3); on the other, Athens, Byzantium, Venice, and the Netherlands enjoyed "virtual insularity" (pp. 72, 284), the key strategic advantage of a maritime state in any maritime-continental dichotomy.

Indeed, the seventeenth-century Dutch — whose fleets ruled the seas — are treated in various ways but never systematically as one of the "big ten" cases. This is obviously because their struggles against England were maritime versus maritime rather than maritime versus continental, and what about their sea victories over Spain? Gray rather dismisses Dutch strategy as having been governed by "limited war aims" (p. 71). But so were England's of that century and up until 1789, as Gray himself argues — not to overthrow rivals but to create an economic and colonial imperium and to maintain the balance of power in Europe. He equally shortchanges Venice for having been "in the business of business, not of glory" (p. 133), but Britain of the eighteenth century is heralded for its expertise in the "business of war," that is, in "the realm of finance and public administration of that finance" (p. 168). I see no difference in their respective profit making, attendant "glory," and the idea of the "sea power of the state" which he allows the British but not the Venetians (p. 3). Maritime empires shared such common strategic characteristics, as Gray shows, but his artificial distinctions often get in the way of his arguments.

Gray's treatment of navies in the major wars he chose to examine is quite excellent but by definition episodic, although he frequently and selectively deals with the strategic continuities of the states under scrutiny. By instead stressing complete continuities, he could have portrayed the equally important leverage of their navies during the eras of "peace" such as the *Pax Britannica* and *Pax Americana*. In so doing, he would also have realized that major powers were minor in the earlier stages of their strategic maturation process. So the nineteenth-century United States cannot be passed off as merely "continental" (p. 214). Rather, it was prospering under that British strategic umbrella until it inherited her mantle as a major sea power. *This* Anglo-American strategic continuity, and

not that of major hot wars, characterized the Cold War and the post-Cold War world as well.

Gray's treatment of continental powers attempting to counter their maritime enemies is welcome. These states throughout history have been fatally handicapped by lack of a "tradition of success" or strategic wisdom (p. 7). But Imperial Japan was never a "maritime" power, rather only a "naval" one by Gray's own definition (p. 84). To cite Cold War Cuba, Vietnam, South Yemen, and Angola as the "Soviet Union's extended overseas imperium" (pp. 47, 74) is misguided in the extreme. Finally, Gray's use of the term "fleet-in-being" is confused with what Mahan termed a "fortress fleet," *always* on the defensive. The fleet-in-being was the stratagem of a maritime power assuming the tactical offensive — what Gray merely calls "raids" like Doolittle's (pp. 39, 42) or "ambushes" as at Midway (pp. 78-79) — while on the strategic defensive, buying time until it had sufficient strength to assume the offensive. (See this reviewer's "The U.S. Fleet-in-Being Strategy of 1942," *Journal of Military History*, January 1994.)

Gray shows that continental states have yet to succeed in obtaining maritime partners in coalitions against major sea powers but that the latter have required continental allies to fight on land in such struggles. The latter stratagem is that of concentration, the cornerstone of Anglo-American strategy in the modern era which Gray develops very well, first with Athens's alliance with Argos against Sparta. He properly lauds Elizabethan sea power and shows how Hitler stupidly sacrificed much of his surface navy off Norway in 1940, thus undermining his ability to invade England. But Gray is unjustly critical of American strategists planning for a long struggle in the Pacific during 1945, as he ignores the Japanese Ichigo offensive which overran most key Chinese strongholds by Christmas of 1944, not to mention the growing kamikaze menace. He is correct, however, that no invasion of Japan — a fixation of the U.S. Army — needed to have been planned.

The great value of this book is in generating the kind of discussion offered above. But it also requires a wide reading in other similar works for the close student of maritime and naval strategies to begin to answer many of the questions Gray poses.

CLARK G. REYNOLDS

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TIM JOYNER, *Magellan* (Camden, ME: International Marine Publishing, 1992). ISBN 087742263X.

While the quincentennial of Columbus's 1492 voyage to the Caribbean has refocused world attention on the expansion of Spain, it has also created interest in the other



Iberian maritime power, Portugal, and her explorers. Indeed, many of Spain's earliest explorations were performed primarily by Portuguese castoffs and rejects. Columbus himself was one such example, and another was Fernão de Magalhães (Ferdinand Magellan). Tim Joyner's masterful *Magellan* adds weight to the argument that Spain must share the glory of her early explorers with her western neighbor.

Joyner, a marine biologist, has written the best book on Magellan now available in English. It will undoubtedly replace the old standby on Magellan, Stefan Zweig's *Conqueror of the Seas: The Story of Magellan* (1938), which was Joyner's first introduction to the explorer and which is still readily available in many public libraries. Joyner's scholarly pursuit of Magellan stemmed from work done for the National Marine Fisheries Service in the strait named after Magellan. In this remote area of the world, Joyner had good reason to ponder Magellan's motives, abilities, and willingness to risk death to cross the Pacific.

Like most biographers, Joyner clearly likes and admires his subject. However, his most important contributions are his judicious and careful judgments on the many controversies surrounding Magellan's life. Why did this Portuguese sailor leave his homeland to work for Spain? How much did Spain trust Magellan? What type of leader was Magellan? What caused the explorer's death in the Philippines? How did the expedition manage to deal with each crisis it faced? Future scholars must consider carefully Joyner's answers to these and many other relevant questions about Magellan.

Joyner's life as a scientist helps him immensely in interpreting Magellan. The author has a keen sense of how bureaucracies work, what attracts or repels governmental support, and how multinational teams function. Magellan wrestled with all these problems. He deftly manipulated numerous Spanish agencies in his struggle to get afloat. At the same time, he courted and won over key figures within the government to support his case before the crown. His endeavors ashore and afloat involved scores of men from many national backgrounds. Joyner's reconstruction of the ships' rosters during the three-year expedition shows at least ten nationalities manning the fleet, foreigners making up more than a third of the total number at the start. While they did not necessarily work together harmoniously, Magellan kept this Tower of Babel at its task. Joyner's contribution to our knowledge of Magellan is a splendid addition to the literature about the Age of Exploration.

JAMES A. LEWIS

DAVID PROCTOR, *Music of the Sea* (London: HMSO, and Greenwich: National Maritime Museum, 1992). 7½" x 10", paper, x + 150 pages, 86 illustrations, including black-and-white photographs and plates, references, select bibliography, index. ISBN 011290520X. £12.95 UK, \$24.95 U.S. (American distribution by Unipub, 4611-F Assembly Dr., Lanham, MD 20705-4391, order # HM05 20X.)

David Proctor, formerly head of printed books and manuscripts at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, has presented his research in a new work entitled *Music of The Sea*. The volume is not only a description of various types of maritime music but also a documentation of the research which has been done in several specific areas. These include shipboard instruments, categories of seaborne music, and contemporary issues ashore which have influenced sea music. The book is illustrated with numerous photographs, prints, paintings, and sketches which, along with the text, serve to support the author's thesis that there is a basic human need for music. This work attempts to reveal the numerous ways in which that need has been met under the very special circumstances presented by shipboard living throughout recorded maritime history.

*Music of The Sea* is not a collection of musical notation nor the words to a favorite old sea chanty. What is here, however, is a history of sea music presented as an artifact from the culture engendered by the sea. Proctor begins with the earliest known uses of instruments at sea, including illustrations and references. He continues with a history of naval bands, sailors' music, and composed music with maritime influences. He then describes the applications of these types of music on land and at sea, all the while integrating his writing with the various stages in the development of Western music and British naval history. Consequently, there is something here for the serious student of both maritime and music history. Moreover, the armchair sailor, the historian, and the maritime music buff will all have something in store in Proctor's book. For those interested in more research, he has even suggested topics for additional work.

In his opening sentence Proctor tells of the earliest recorded music at sea, a player of a clarinet-type instrument in the bow of a boat depicted in the tomb of Seshemnefer in Giza, Egypt, dated about 2450 B.C. Other early examples from ancient Egypt follow, including harpists and singers found on ancient boat models. Proctor's sources reveal reed players, singers of "mouth music," double oboes, rhythm sticks, and singers of work songs. Some of these are referred to by Herodotus, Plutarch, and other scholars who include flutes and rowing songs in works dating from ancient times. Shakespeare used



Plutarch as a source for his inclusion of music in his description of Mark Antony's rowing to meet Cleopatra, where flutes accompanied the rowing strokes. Proctor maintains that references are scarce not because music was a rare occurrence on board ships but because it was so commonplace that it would have been superfluous to have made mention of it.

Other examples from northern Europe from a similar time have been found in carvings from the Bronze Age. These rock carvings show people taking part in seasonal celebrations and ship-honoring ceremonies in scenes of dancing and music-making with instruments such as a tall bronze horn called a "lyr." Discoveries of instruments include whistles in Viking burial sites, a lyre from 642 A.D. at the Sutton Hoo ship burial site in Woolbridge, England, and a falster pipe with a double reed, dated 1080, at a Scandinavian shipyard site.

Land instruments were also played in shipboard ceremonies and rituals which were carried out at sea in much the same manner as they were on land. Many instruments, however, began to serve a purpose for which they may not have been originally intended. The loud free-reed instruments like the shawm, along with trumpets, crumhorns, and trombones, were known to have been aboard a Danish ship of King Christian IV in 1610, where they were not only part of a royal band but served as a system of foghorns!

The text continues to describe other applications of music at sea up through the age of wooden ships and into the twentieth century. Examples include hired shipboard musicians on royal vessels, sailors' own creations, land songs, patriotic music, sometimes all stirred up together in a multi-ethnic melting pot. A chapter on the evolution of official music on board recounts sources from the first trumpeters of four thousand years ago to the naval bands of World War II warships. "Music Born of the Sea" is a section devoted to composers inspired by the sea, a subject which Proctor suggests as a potential research project.

Most readers will have heard of the two major categories of music: the sea chanties or work songs which accompanied many of the arduous tasks afloat, and the off-watch songs and ballads often referred to as "fo'c'sle songs" or "forebitters," so-named because of the location in which they were sung. The work songs were necessary to establish a cadence and ease the tedium of repetitive hauling, rowing, or pumping. The songs in the sailors' free time were a way to alleviate boredom and pass the time away. The shipboard musicians would sing to build *esprit*, boast of naval prowess, or simply recall familiar songs from their life ashore. According to Proctor's research, in some early voyages of colonization there were specific reasons for actually outfitting ships with musicians. He notes that on a French vessel in 1405 musicians were

supplied to ensure the quality of life in the new colony in the Canary Islands.

The value of music for morale boosting was apparently appreciated by the renowned British Naval Captain William Bligh, who engaged a nearsighted Irish fiddler to provide music for dancing and relaxation in the 1780s. In fact, Bligh insisted that his men exercise by dancing in order to maintain their good health, which was a theory set forth by his former captain, the master navigator James Cook. In other voyages, such as the Spanish naval expedition of 1789-94 under Captain Malaspina, music was used to introduce the ship to a new culture, hoping to ease the encounter.

On polar expeditions, music for the morale of the crew was most necessary due to the long hours of winter, particularly if the vessel was trapped in the ice. Among other interesting anecdotes is the story of Rear Admiral Sir W. E. Parry's barrel organ, made in London in 1801, which was used to accompany his men as they marched around the deck for exercise during his arctic expeditions in 1819-27. This organ is on display at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, along with Parry's violin and a banjo used on Shackleton's 1914 voyage. Apparently the banjo was the last item saved when the ship sank, and it proved invaluable in preserving morale. These artifacts are but a few in the history of such tales, which support the author's premise of the value of music at sea.

Sailor Jack Tar, known through the ages in many a salty ditty, romanticized in song for many years, appears now to have been someone who has not only survived a life at sea but made his mark in the journal of history. David Proctor has used his expertise and fascination with this subject to present a concise and fascinating look at how music has nurtured the spirit of the sailorman and, indeed, everyman in *Music of The Sea*.

DAISY NELL COFFIN

Essex, Massachusetts

ANN SAVOURS, *The Voyages of the Discovery: The Illustrated History of Scott's Ship* (London: Virgin Books, 1992). xvi + 384 pages, photographs, maps, chronology, notes, bibliography, index. ISBN 185227-1175.

The ship *Discovery* was built for the British National Antarctic Expedition of 1901-1904 commanded by Robert Scott, a voyage which was only the first part of a lengthy career in Antarctic research and exploration that lasted until 1931. Ann Savours has written the story of that career in *Voyages of the Discovery*, a book which is more a history of twentieth-century exploration research than a detailed account of a particular vessel.



A three-masted wooden barque of 172-foot length and nearly 1,600 tons displacement was not easily built during the last decade of the nineteenth century, but the expedition organizing committee eventually settled on a shipyard in Dundee, Scotland. There the specially strengthened and shaped, double-planked hull was launched in 1901, fitted with a coal-powered engine, and made capable of carrying a complement of forty-two together with a two-year supply of food and equipment.

Savours divides the book into six parts, each chronicling a major part of *Discovery's* life and three of them involving work in the Antarctic. The Scott expedition spent more than two years in Antarctica with the ship locked in the ice while the crew found out much about the nature of the Ross Ice Shelf and explored land areas to the south and west of McMurdo Sound, penetrating further into the interior of the continent than previous parties had gone. The author gives a good description of the scientific and geographic work performed (pp. 90-91), and she maintains that, contrary to common belief, Scott and Ernest Shackleton got along well together on the voyage.

The *Discovery* was not to return to Antarctic waters for twenty years, serving first as the annual supply ship for Hudson's Bay Company posts in northern Canada, then as a cargo ship in the Atlantic and northern Russia during the early days of World War I. Sent in 1916 in relief of Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition, *Discovery* got no farther than Montevideo before Shackleton was able by other means to retrieve his stranded crew from Elephant Island. The ship returned to supporting the war effort as a cargo vessel mainly along the French coast, then sailed in 1919 to the Black Sea in search of trading opportunities in the new Soviet Union.

As an expedition was being formed in 1922 for oceanographic research directed toward the whaling industry in the South Atlantic, *Discovery* was purchased from the Hudson's Bay Company, refitted as a research vessel, and rebuilt for better sailing qualities. Between 1925-1927 under the ownership of the government of the Falkland Islands, the *Discovery* Expedition studied whales, their food sources, and their habitat, and confirmed the existence of the Antarctic Convergence forming the front between warmer and cooler waters of the Southern Ocean.

In 1929, *Discovery* went to sea with the British, Australian, New Zealand Antarctic Research Expedition (BANZARE), an initiative to lay territorial claim to a large portion of the Antarctic coast in order to protect British whaling interests. Commanded by Douglas Mawson and largely funded from Australia, the expedition mapped much of the coast between Adélie Land (longitude 140°E) and Enderby Land (45°E), discovering and naming portions of the intervening coast.

After BANZARE, *Discovery* returned to London to

serve as headquarters and training ship for the Sea Scouts for several decades until 1979, when the Maritime Trust acquired the vessel and transferred her to a permanent berth in Dundee.

The book is nicely written and uses original source material effectively. The maps are unusually well chosen and useful. The author goes to some length to set each episode of the ship's career into context, so that the book is more than a string of unconnected sailing vignettes, a danger to which a book of this type is susceptible. Thus, for example, the chapters about the *Discovery* Oceanographic Expedition explain the background of European settlement in the South Atlantic islands, the emergence of the whaling industry in that region during this century, and related expeditions and activities of other European nations.

By her grasp of both detail and the larger picture, Savours makes this book a pleasure to read and a good addition to the recent spate of literature on twentieth-century Antarctic exploration, which includes the diaries of Douglas Mawson (published in 1988), Frank Debenham (1992), and the republishing of Shackleton's *South* (1991). The principal complaint is perhaps a chauvinist one, that both the author and British explorers since Ross have been so reluctant to give full credence and credit to the work of the U.S. Exploring Expedition of 1838-1842 led by Charles Wilkes, which demonstrated the continental dimensions of Antarctica in 1840. At least it can be said that an Australian (Mawson) was responsible for naming a portion of the Antarctic coast Wilkes Land in recognition of that accomplishment.

E. JEFFREY STANN

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VIRGINIA STEELE WOOD, ED., *Robert Durfee's Journal and Recollections of New Port, Rhode Island, Free-town, Massachusetts, New York City & Long Island, Jamaica & Cuba, West Indies & Saint Simons Island, Georgia ca. 1785-1810* (Marion, MA: Belden Books, 1990). xxii + 131 pages, illustrations, 5 maps, abbreviations, bibliography, index. \$29.95.

The family of Virginia Steele Wood has had a long association with Saint Simons Island, Georgia, extending over several generations, and an interest in the history of the area led to her discovery of this journal. It is the story of an obscure individual whose quest for health and the means to support himself was fraught with difficulties. His account helps to bring home very vividly the precarious nature of life in the United States in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.



Robert Durfee's father was a sea captain who was involved in trade out of Newport, Rhode Island until the Revolutionary War and the instability of postwar paper money brought poverty to him and his family. Hoping for better opportunities, he moved his wife and four children to New York City. When the father died in 1798, the family was left without any means of support. The mother opened a boarding house and the children did what they could to earn money. Robert had a series of short-term jobs, including a voyage to Jamaica, but the latter experience left him with financial and health problems. He moved to Long Island where he gradually recovered his health. While there he used his talent for drawing and painting to make likenesses of individuals that greatly pleased them. Determined to seek employment in a warm climate, he sailed with his brother, the master of a schooner, to Savannah. There Robert learned that the job he sought had been filled. He continued his voyage in the ship to Saint Simons Island and visited with people on shore while the cargo was unloaded. Robert decided to remain on the island while his brother made another New York to Savannah voyage. In the summer of 1805 he learned that his brother had survived the wreck of the schooner on a bar in the Savannah River and was returning home as a passenger on another ship. Consequently, Robert remained on the island for the rest of his life.

In the years that followed, Robert Durfee lived with various families and supported himself by teaching school. Making barely enough to survive, he was a poor prospect for marriage and he seems to have had difficulty in maintaining long-term relationships. For many years during his adult life he was lonely and without close friends and family. He was sustained by his religious faith and by friends and neighbors who helped him at critical times. Through some means Durfee did spend some time in McIntosh County, Georgia in 1810, and he visited New York in 1814. It is assumed that he died sometime after 1820 and was buried on Sapelo Island, Georgia.

Recognizing that the journal was valuable for the information it contained about the early history of Saint Simons Island and its inhabitants, the editor spent a great deal of time and effort in tracking down the data on the people, places, and events mentioned by Durfee. The lengthy notes are invaluable for local historians and others interested in the island as well as a testament to the patience, diligence, and imagination of the editor. A number of intriguing illustrations and maps enhance the value of the book.

HAROLD D. LANGLEY

Smithsonian Institution

PETER GOODWIN, *The Naval Cutter Alert, 1777* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1991). 9½" x 10", cloth, 120 pages, 30 photos, 120 line drawings. ISBN 09615021-85. £20.

JOHN MCKAY AND RON COLEMAN, *The 24-Gun Frigate Pandora, 1779* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1992). 9½" x 10", cloth, 128 pages, 30 photos, 275 line drawings. ISBN 0961502193. £20.

XAVIER PASTOR, *The Ships of Christopher Columbus: Santa Maria, Niña, Pinta* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1992). 9½" x 10", cloth, 128 pages, 40 photos, 200 line drawings. ISBN 0851775853. £20.

JOHN ROBERTS, *The Battleship Dreadnought* (London: Conway Maritime Press, 1992). 9½" x 10", 256 pages, 40 photos, 650 line drawings. ISBN 15575005-76. £25.

Most of us are already more than familiar with Conway's excellent *Anatomy of the Ship* series. For the most part, all four of these titles follow this series' well-proven three-section format. They begin with a brief narrative history of the ship(s) in question, followed by an equally brief selection of photographs, while the bulk of each volume is dedicated to the last section which consists of numerous line drawings of virtually all of the parts of the ship(s) and the vast bulk of their equipment. The majority of these drawings, but not all of them, are drawn to scale. In keeping with the series tradition, these four volumes encompass both well-known and lesser-known ships, dating from the fifteenth, eighteenth, and twentieth centuries. All of the authors are more than qualified to present these volumes and, with the exception of Pastor, all of them have contributed to this series in the past. About the only complaint that can be made about the arrangement of these volumes is that the bibliographies are located at the end of the descriptive essays instead of the back of the books.

Pastor's book looks at three of the most historically important ships ever examined in this series, and one would be hard pressed to find another author so well acquainted with Spanish ships in Columbus's era. In fact, Pastor was a key participant in the recent reconstruction of Columbus's little flotilla, built to commemorate the five-hundredth anniversary of his "discovery" of America. This volume is somewhat unique in this series because it looks at two different types of ships at the same time. It is also different in that there are many gaps in our archival information on these three ships, making this work somewhat more conjectural than others in the series. Despite this lack of firm data, the author has concluded that the



*Santa Maria* was a nao while her smaller companions were caravels. Readers might be surprised to learn that there have been four reconstructions of the *Santa Maria* to date. The bulk of the photographs and illustrations are reproductions of contemporary artwork and the various reconstructions.

The *Pandora* and the *Alert* are not as well known but they are still welcome additions to the series. The authors of the former volume have taken advantage of the ongoing excavation of the *Pandora*'s wreck. The authors of both volumes have made good use of the many contemporary drawings available in British archives, including draughts of many similar ships. Thus, both of these works are much more definitive and far less speculative than Pastor's. One minor irritant is the lack of details on the *Alert*'s fate after she was captured by the French in 1778. All of the photographs are of museum models and contemporary paintings and illustrations. The authors of both works have, for the most part, provided us with very succinct and informative accounts of the evolution of these ship types and where their subjects belong within it. Unfortunately, the authors of the *Pandora* volume give far too much credence to the popular misconception that the French navy's battle strategy relied upon inflicting damage to their opponents' sails and rigging.

The *Dreadnought* is easily the best-known ship covered in these four volumes. The amount of information on this ship is so voluminous that Roberts's work is twice as large as any of the other three. His coverage of the factors which provided the impetus for the development of this super battleship and its design stages is particularly noteworthy, and his brief account of her career is also very complete. The larger than usual section of photographs covers both the construction and career of this famous ship. The photographs, like those in the other three volumes, have clearly been well chosen, and the notes complement the main text nicely. It seems that a few of the pictures used were not in pristine condition, but these imperfections concern background areas.

Naturally, the bulk of all four of these volumes is devoted to the scaled drawings of these various ships and their fittings. The scope and detail of the drawing is of a very high caliber, and it is almost impossible to find any detail or even minor piece of equipment which is not covered in some way. We have all the major plan views, including general arrangement, side, deck, sheer lines, and even some isometric ones. Of these, the latter are generally unscaled, but the scale of all the other drawings is clearly indicated. All of the drawings are thoughtfully grouped into well-defined sections and each individual drawing has a key number for quick reference. Even the rigging plan and the sails of the sailing ships are included. Care has been taken to ensure that readers who wish to

copy these drawings will not lose any details over the spine of the book.

In general, one can only make a few minor criticisms about these drawings. The first is that these volumes do not provide port side views. Another minor drawback is that, apart from the jacket artwork, there is no information offered on their various paint schemes, and these illustrations do not include any deck views. Also, unlike the earlier volume on the IJN *Yamato*, there is no diagram of the wreck site of the *Pandora*. The only other minor concern that one may have with the Pastor work is that there really is no reason for any of the full ship plans to be divided over two pages; perhaps the publisher wanted this volume to appear to reach the average size of other works in this series.

Overall, all four of these volumes would be worthwhile additions to the libraries of ship enthusiasts and model makers. Each of them contributes to the reputation of this great series and can be wholeheartedly recommended to anyone with an interest in any of these ships. The quality of the drawings, photographs, and brief but informative texts is outstanding.

PETER K. H. MISPELKAMP

Pointe Claire, Quebec

DUANE A. CLINE, *Navigation in the Age of Discovery. An Introduction* (Rogers, AR: Montfleury, Inc., 1990). 214 pages, illustrations. ISBN 0962721301.

This book has a more limited range than its main title might suggest. It offers in reality only a rudimentary survey of the art of navigation in the early seventeenth century to readers with no prior knowledge of navigation. Except for a casual nod to the Portuguese and the Dutch, it deals exclusively with navigation on English warships and merchantmen. It offers no new facts or insights. Its style is simple and patchy as a caption in a showcase. Readers are further aided in understanding the text by the addition of ninety-three drawings, whose plain design sometimes strongly suggests run-of-the-mill TV comics.

In order to provide the reader with a kind of framework to take in the numerous bits and pieces of information, author Duane Cline, an expert in the field of theater and theater history who developed a side interest in the history of the Pilgrim Fathers, has chosen to take the voyage of the *Mayflower* in 1620 as a theoretical example of early navigation techniques. Having first given a brief overview of the rise of ocean shipping and the general elements of navigation technology, followed by a short presentation of the master, the crew, and the vessel



who figure as the leading characters in his book, Cline then proceeds to discuss all the navigation aids that might have been used in sailing a ship like the *Mayflower* from England to America. Starting from lead lines, almanacs, and time-keeping tools, the author moves via log-lines, compasses, and altitude-measuring instruments to charts, globes, tables, journals, and plotting devices.

While this arrangement of information certainly has some merits from a didactic point of view, it also suffers from several serious defects. First of all, many sections are now unduly burdened with references to supposed practices aboard the *Mayflower* which are never substantiated by fact. In truth, Cline has neither hard evidence on the techniques that were actually employed when the ship sailed across the Atlantic (no journal or log book survives [p. 193]) nor on the set of books, charts, and instruments that was carried aboard, nor even on the level of expertise in the art of navigation (as distinct from seamanship or knowledge of ship construction) that its master Christopher Jones by then may have possessed (pp. 27-31). There are simply too many might-have-beens.

Second, the present arrangement suggests that the average mariner in ocean shipping around 1620 routinely employed an extremely wide gamut of navigational aids. But did the common seaman really make use of the full battery of tools that Cline here describes, including such items as universal ring dials, dip circles, or sinical quadrants?

Third, the author devotes far more space to the description of tools and instruments than the explanation of methods or procedures. He stresses things rather than thoughts. Loxodromic navigation and the use of mathematics, for instance, get only perfunctory treatment (pp. 162-163, 181-182). The book portrays the seaman as a *homo faber* rather than a *homo sapiens*, but this ignores much of the advance in navigation technology that was taking place in the very period that the *Mayflower* set sail to Cape Cod.

As a first introduction to navigation techniques around 1620, Cline's book is surely not bad. Readers who want to get a more thorough grasp of the art of navigation in the early seventeenth century, however, should consult the good old works by E. G. R. Taylor or the unsurpassed masterpiece by David Waters, *The Art of Navigation in England in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Times*, which apparently lay at the base of what Cline here presents in a boiled-down version.

KAREL DAVIDS

Leiden, The Netherlands

JAMES R. GIBSON, *Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods: The Maritime Fur Trade of the Northwest Coast, 1785-1841* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992). xiii + 422 pages. ISBN 077350-8295.

One of the outstanding merits of *Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods* is its breadth of sources, which include Russian repositories, the Hudson's Bay Company's (HBC) archives in Winnipeg, and a thorough use of American ships' logs and records in Boston, New Haven, Salem, Nantucket, Providence, and elsewhere. The richness of the sources, especially the New England ones, add a new depth to the documentation and analysis. The second merit, its scope, comes from a treatment of all the major actors — British, American, Russian, Indian, Hawaiian, and Chinese — and all the scenes — London, Montreal, the Northwest Coast, the Sandwich Islands, and Canton. Gibson examines the trade in all its parts, from capital organization and crew recruitment, through the bargaining in the harbors of the coast, to the Canton system of Cohong monopoly. This sense of the Northwest Coast fur trade as part of a world-encircling system (or systems) that touched on specie, tea, silk, and porcelain as well as furs is fresh and enlightening to those who have been concerned with only a part of the play.

Such breadth and depth allows a better understanding of the trade's fluctuations: the initial British advantage, the rapid rise of Boston supremacy, the British "comeback" through the HBC monopolistic dominance, the shifts in patterns of trade, of trade goods, and of terms of trade, the depletion of fur-bearing animals on the coast, and the shifts of Chinese trade in fur, manufactured goods, specie, tea, and opium.

One of the major themes which emerges from this comprehensive view is that of American superiority in maritime trade, a superiority ended only by the depletion of the coast and by the HBC's ability to impose a monopoly from its land-based posts. Gibson attributes this American superiority in large part to the personal interest which the ships' officers were given in the commercial success of their voyages; to the skillful, obedient, and honest crewmen who manned the vessels; and to the economical way in which those ships were fitted. The British were hampered by various inefficiencies, not least by the monopoly on the Asian trade held by the East India and South Seas companies, a condition which forced British subjects, including both the HBC and the Northwest Company, to trade with China through the East India Company or through Boston merchants.

The boom years of the American coast trade were from 1790 to 1810. After that, a number of factors, nota-



bly the Non-intercourse Acts, the War of 1812, depletion, and then the aggressiveness of the HBC, forced the Americans out of the Northwest Coast, though not the China, trade.

Gibson, of course, also concerns himself with the well-trodden area of the Northwest Coast Indians and their part in the fur trade. A consensus among historians has emerged in recent years that argues that the period saw, in the words of Robin Fisher, its leading exponent, "a mutually beneficial economic activity in which the Indians played a determining role."

Gibson agrees that the natives of the coast were eager to trade and were experienced and capable at it. On the other hand, he gives more emphasis than has recently been granted to the violence between European and native traders. "Euroamerican-Indian relations, initially cordial, soon became strained, with mutual distrust periodically exploding in violence, mainly owing to prejudging, defrauding, and kidnapping on the part of white traders. Gun-running and rum-running aggravated the situation" (p. 171). This takes us back to Fredric Howay (to whom, among others, the book is dedicated) and implicitly away from Fisher. Gibson concludes that, for the Northwest Coast natives, the trade was neither just destructive nor just constructive, but both. The new goods stimulated native culture, supplemented rather than supplanted their own food, tools, and other goods. The author seems, however, to give weight to the negative effects. He sees a proliferation and, hence, a debasement of chiefs, an increase in slavery, an impairment of health by alcohol and tobacco, and a decrease in numbers from firearms and epidemics, most especially from the 1835-38 smallpox epidemic. "This demographic disaster broke the back of northern Indian resistance to Euroamerican encroachment, both territorial and cultural" (p. 276).

The importance, as well as the evidence, which Gibson gives to smallpox illustrates the problem with this pestilential line of argument. The first epidemic in the 1770s was likely brought by the Spanish, who were not much in the trade business at all. Its origin might have been in Canton, that is, Chinese and not European. The 1835 outbreak seems to have begun at Sitka, but who brought it — whether traders or not — is uncertain. Its origin could again be Asian, not European. While the outbreaks would not have come without European-native contact, it seems a little odd to blame the trade. We do not blame contact and trade for other historical epidemics, nor for the almost annual flu visitations, usually from Asia, which still afflict North America. Pestilence has a long history and it seems odd to describe nineteenth-century epidemics as a negative impact of the fur trade, perhaps as odd as a description of AIDS in North America as a negative impact of commerce with Africa.

Gibson makes an overall assessment of the trade upon Hawaii (disease here plays a role too, though Gibson stresses warfare more), South China, and New England. For the last, he notes that the China trade helped to accumulate a large amount of capital in a short time and that the Nor'west voyages made the fortunes of many Boston families, helped to regenerate that city, and affected its diet, dress, and furnishings.

There are, of course, details with which any reviewer will quibble. Like most writers, Gibson presumes that native women who sold their sexual favors were mostly slaves. Some no doubt were, but those unchaste females with "disgusting" lip pieces (labrets) met by an American sailor in 1791 could hardly have been slaves. Slave women, so far as we know, did not wear labrets. There is no evidence, only preconception, for the assumption that most prostitutes were slaves. Another quite minor point is that the John Webber drawing of a sea otter that adorns both the dust jacket and the frontispiece is erroneously attributed to the published Cook atlas of 1784. The picture reproduced is not the engraved version, but one of several original colored drawings.

DOUGLAS COLE

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DONALD S. JOHNSON, *Charting the Sea of Darkness: The Four Voyages of Henry Hudson* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993). xiii + 242 pages. ISBN 087742-3210.

Astonishingly, all we know about Henry Hudson took place in four years, from 1607 to 1611. From the period before 1607 we know only the names of his wife and his three sons; after his death as a castaway in 1611 we have only the spare trial records of those few men who reached home. It is evident, however, that in 1607 Hudson was already an accomplished sailor and navigator.

Hudson's first voyage, sponsored in England, was an attempt to reach the Orient by sailing north. On that voyage, he reached the west coast of Spitzbergen before being stopped by ice. The second voyage, in 1608, also from England and in the same vessel, was an attempt at the northeast passage, but it only got as far as the west coast of Nevaya Zemla. The third year Hudson made a voyage for the Dutch East India Company. This time he explored the coast of North America from Penobscot Bay to Cape Hatteras and sailed up the Hudson River as far as present-day Albany, thus establishing Dutch claims to the Hudson River valley. In 1610, once more engaged by Englishmen, Hudson tried for a northwest passage through waters already probed by Frobisher and Davis. This time he explored the east coast of Hudson Bay and James Bay.



Hence came the English claims to those regions. The trip was fearsome; the ship's company wintered over at the bottom of James Bay and, nearly starving, mutinied early on the way back. Hudson and a handful of crewmen were set adrift; others, probably the ringleaders, died weeks later in a fight with Indians at a rookery where they had gone for food. Only eight of the original twenty-three members of the ship's company got back to England alive.

The logs or journals of all these voyages were first printed by Samuel Purchase in a great collection of such accounts called *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas his Pilgrimes* (1625). Donald S. Johnson has extracted from this work the accounts of the four Hudson voyages and reprinted them together for the first time in this century. It should be said at once that Johnson as editor took liberties with the texts that (at least to this reviewer) go far beyond what was necessary to "enhance readability." Readers wanting an accurate rendition may go to the original Hakluyt Society edition, edited by G. M. Asher (1860, reprinted 1954). Hudson's most important voyages were the last two. The journal of the voyage of 1609 that led to the rediscovery of the Hudson River was actually written by Hudson's mate, Robert Juet. A modern edition is Robert M. Lunney, ed., *Juet's Journal* (Newark, NJ: New Jersey Historical Society, 1959). An accurate edition of Hudson's last voyage is Philip Edwards, ed., *Last Voyages: Cavendish, Hudson, Raleigh* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

Despite the considerable superiority of these editions as far as accuracy goes, Johnson's volume is the one that reprints all four known Hudson voyages. The journal of each voyage is imbedded in a rather complicated chapter that starts with a prologue in which Johnson describes the trip using modern maps. (There is some guesswork here.) Then he reprints the journal or fragments of same and follows it with an epilogue in which he reflects on issues raised by the journals. Finally, for each voyage there is a section entitled "Origins of Hudson's Geographic Notions." Here Johnson not only discusses geographical knowledge available to Hudson but also reprints the relevant parts of contemporary maps. Here again Johnson exercises his editor's authority by "stripping away all unnecessary detail." Despite the bowdlerization, Johnson's use of ancient and modern maps for each voyage is a unique and valuable part of his book.

That Johnson is himself a sailor interested in the history of sailing is evident. The book in hand will appeal to sailors. All the voyages reveal how dependent Hudson and his contemporaries were on compass, latitude, and soundings. Hudson was always casting the lead, not for fear of running aground but to know where he was. It is clear that he and his contemporaries put great stock in charting the ocean floor as well as their landfalls. The

inability to measure longitude, as Johnson points out, was the great weakness of their navigation. In contrast to the details of navigating in little-known or unknown waters, the journals have almost nothing to say about seamanship, although today's reader can only gasp in amazement at the skill with which Hudson and his crew completed these four hazardous voyages. The reality puts Hornblower in a new perspective.

An appendix gives interesting details of the *Half Moon*, Hudson's ship on his third voyage. She was built in Amsterdam in 1608 for the Dutch East India Company and so serves to illustrate the vessels that helped make the Dutch masters of ocean commerce in the seventeenth century. A great deal is known about her design and construction because of the research involved in building seaworthy models twice in this century to celebrate the exploration of the Hudson River. It would have been nice to have similar attention paid to the *Discovery*, Hudson's vessel (a bark) on his last voyage. She was used by George Weymouth before Hudson and made five more voyages into the Arctic after him, indeed a sturdy vessel.

For all its inadequacies of editing, this book brings together much information on an exciting and important career. It is profusely illustrated with small black and white illustrations as well as the maps mentioned above and will make a pleasant addition to any seaman's library.

MICHAEL G. HALL

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ALLAN R. MILLETT, *In Many a Strife: General Gerald C. Thomas and the U.S. Marine Corps, 1917-1956* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1993). 7¼" x 10½", cloth, xx + 456 pages, foreword, maps, photographs, bibliography, index. ISBN 0870210343. \$39.95.

Biographies of Marines are few and, for the most part, consider the lives and careers of either commandants (such as John A. Lejeune) or the flamboyant (such as Smedley D. Butler). Overshadowed by the distinguished careers of such luminaries, some Marine Corps officers nonetheless performed invaluable and distinguished service to this peculiar naval service; that such yeoman careers are unnoticed and unappreciated, except by the very few, is one of the melancholy ironies for those privileged to wear forest green. Only a handful of senior officers, now mostly retired, can remember Jerry Thomas or claim to have served with him. Indeed, in the fine foreword to this volume, Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons, Director of Marine Corps History and Museums, proclaims unabashedly that Thomas was "the Richelieu of the Marine Corps."



The author brings a wealth of academic expertise to this work. Himself a Marine and Raymond E. Mason, Jr. Professor of Military History at the Ohio State University, Millett draws heavily on two of his many publications in the preparation of this biography. In his doctoral dissertation, published as *The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army, 1881-1925* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1975), Millett uses the life and times of a distinguished officer to present a history of the U.S. Army in its transition from a frontier constabulary to the land force of a major industrial power. His subsequent treatment of the Marine Corps as an institution, *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps* (New York: Macmillan, 1980) stands as an enduring and seminal institutional history of the smaller of the naval services. In his biography of General Thomas, Millett brings the mature historical techniques evident in those works to bear on the life of a distinguished, albeit relatively unknown, Marine.

Thomas's career encompassed the Marine Corps' own sometimes frenetic and painful transition from a naval constabulary to colonial infantry and, finally, to a modern amphibious assault force in support of the fleet. His own baptism of fire took place on hallowed ground, Belleau Wood, in World War I. Following this epic encounter in which half the Leatherneck brigade suffered wounds or died, Thomas earned a commission as a second lieutenant. Rising slowly and frustratingly through the officer ranks in the lean interwar years, he joined the 1st Marine Division for its epic seizure of Guadalcanal-Tulagi in 1942. While he served as the Assistant Chief of Staff, G3, Thomas's talents drew him closer to the division commander, Major General Archer A. Vandegrift. As the poorly supported and frustrating encounter ashore grew increasingly perilous, Vandegrift depended more and more on Thomas's judgment and made him his chief of staff. While other naval battles in the Pacific war might have witnessed more blood and trauma, the invasion of the Solomons tested the Marine Corps like no other. And Jerry Thomas deserved every accolade he earned there.

For those who feel they have read quite enough about Belleau Wood and Guadalcanal, there is much more to glean from *In Many a Strife*. The frustrations of climbing through the officer ranks during the interwar years, in a system bound by a sacrosanct lineal list based on strict seniority, are worth reflection as America again undergoes a period of military and naval retrenchment. For this historian, Millett's account of Thomas's participation in the imbroglio surrounding unification of the armed forces in the immediate post-World War II era is perhaps the most interesting. Using materials from Thomas's own unpublished memoir, Millett provides new and insightful perspectives on this traumatic era as the Marine Corps

demanding and fought for its rightful place as one of the nation's armed forces. After reading this section of *In Many a Strife*, historians and even casual readers of American naval history will be less sanguine with traditional treatments of the Marine Corps' small role in the fractious arena of interservice politics.

MERRILL L. BARTLETT

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WALTER NUGENT, *Crossings: The Great Transatlantic Migrations, 1870-1914* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992). 6¼" x 9½", cloth, xvi + 234 pages, 13 black-and-white photos, 23 tables, 10 maps, bibliography and notes, index. ISBN 025334140X. \$29.95.

Walter Nugent's new book analyzes the migration of Europeans across the Atlantic in the era of steamship travel. In contrast to other studies that concentrate on emigrants from one European country or immigrants to one country in the Americas, this work examines all major donor and receiver countries. Thus, Argentina and Brazil are included, though the emphasis on the Atlantic means that Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa are not; Austria-Hungary, Spain, and Portugal are included, though smaller European donors are not. Nugent's purpose in writing a comparative study is to test two ideas: first, that countries move from high to low levels of mortality and fertility at some specific point in their modernization process, and second, that the U.S. immigration experience was exceptional.

Nugent analyzes these two ideas separately. A short introductory section of four chapters provides information on the Atlantic region, mortality, fertility, and general migration patterns. The author presents data on mortality and fertility rates for all countries considered in the book, a compilation of data that many will find quite valuable. He uses these data to argue that fertility declined at different times in different countries (due to country-specific factors) while mortality declined everywhere around 1880 (due to common factors, such as the provision of clean water and improvements in sanitation).

The bulk of the book is devoted to the analysis of individual donors (seven chapters) and receivers (four chapters) with a view to testing whether the U.S. experience was exceptional. For each donor country, Nugent provides basic information concerning the volume of emigration and the background of the emigrants. Thus, for Scandinavia (except for Finland), the reader learns that emigration started early, most was from particular areas of Sweden, and over 90 percent went to the U.S. Families



migrated early, there was more individual migration later in the nineteenth century, and few migrants returned. For each receiver country, Nugent discusses the volume, timing, sources, and causes of immigration. Thus, for Argentina, the reader learns that immigration was rapid after 1870 and it was oriented towards agriculture until about 1900 when the *latifunda* made land ownership more difficult and led to more urban settlement. About 30 percent of the population was foreign-born in 1914, and about 80 percent of the immigrants were Italian or Spanish. Nugent uses the analysis of the different countries to illustrate that immigration to the U.S. was different than to other countries but was not exceptional; in fact, migration from and to each country had its peculiarities.

Nugent's analytical framework and findings will not surprise anyone familiar with the history of transatlantic migrations. For example, he stresses that economic motives were the primary cause of migration. Thus, when economic opportunities could be found at home, emigration virtually ceased. This happened in Germany after the economy boomed starting in the late 1880s. The emigration decision also depended on the ability to get to ports. For eastern Europe, the late building of the railroads delayed emigration until after 1870. Italians, who were close to ports, also started their transatlantic emigration fairly late, but they earlier engaged in substantial migration within Europe. Finally, the change to the steamship as a method of travel, by making the voyage shorter and cheaper, led to the large migrations of the 1870 to 1914 period. For most countries, this change also caused increased migration of individual males who sold their labor services for a season or two and then returned to their country of origin.

In Nugent's analysis, the U.S. case appears unexceptional. Yet this statement is true only because the author limits his analysis to the 1870 to 1914 period during which worldwide industrial development and increased urbanization caused migration for labor purposes to become important. In fact, Nugent ends his book with the statement that the U.S. was different only in the volume of immigration and the amount of available land. Canada, for example, had much less available land except for a brief period after 1900. In both Argentina and Brazil, the presence of large farms limited widespread land ownership. Only in the U.S. was there an extensive amount of land available for private settlement. With economic motives being the predominant reason for migration, then surely the greater availability of land in the U.S. is an important difference. For those migrating permanently, the common type before 1870, a move to the U.S. was the move most likely to result in an improvement in one's standard of living. Thus, before 1870, only the U.S. received a large volume of immigration. Though migration

after 1870 became more widespread, when viewed over the entire century the early start and large volume clearly made the U.S. case substantially different, whether or not it was "exceptional."

A few minor problems exist with what is otherwise an impressive effort at comparing the different international migrations of the period. First, the maps are not adequately integrated with the text. Often, cities or regions are discussed in the text but never shown on the maps, causing confusion (and a search through an atlas) for the reader. Second, Nugent is clearly less familiar with migration before 1870. His statement that mortality on the ships fell sharply in the 1850s (p. 31) is almost certainly not true; rather, only the Irish famine migration of the late 1840s was subject to extreme mortality. But these problems do not detract from what is generally an interesting and informative comparative analysis of international migrations in the age of the steamship.

RAYMOND L. COHN

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ROGER C. SMITH, *Vanguard of Empire. Ships of Exploration in the Age of Columbus* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992). ISBN 0195073576.

In the flurry of publishing activity that accompanied the quincentenary of Columbus's first voyage across the Atlantic, ships and seafaring received much less attention than they deserved. This book is one of the welcome exceptions. By blending the findings from documentary and archaeological research, the author aims to analyze the ships, nautical equipment, and technological advancement that made Columbus's voyage possible. Currently Florida's State Underwater Archaeologist, Roger Smith had considerable professional experience with the Institute for Nautical Archaeology in Texas before acquiring advanced training in history. He therefore represents the new generation of archeologist-historians whose dual expertise greatly enhances their understanding of the past.

The book under review provides an authoritative analysis of Mediterranean ships from the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, placed in their historical context. The chapters are arranged topically and focus on Portuguese and Spanish ships above all, although Italian, French, Dutch, and English ships enter the story from time to time. There are nine chapters altogether, plus several appendixes, notes, a bibliography, and an index of persons and places as well as a general index.

A highly informative review of the published literature about European ships and seafaring has been relegated to Chapter 8, just before the conclusion. It would



have been better placed at the start of the volume, as it provides the intellectual context for the book as a whole. The author ably surveys the standard primary and secondary works about European ships and seafaring for his period, providing welcome and little-known details about the lives of many of the authors. He also includes a discussion of reference works to guide scholars through the intricacies of nautical terminology. In short, he provides an indispensable starting point for anyone embarking on research in the field.

Even more usefully, he summarizes the archaeological findings about the handful of shipwrecks that have been thoroughly examined for the period. Nautical archaeology is still in its infancy as a discipline, and its practitioners are very anxious to distance themselves from the pleasure divers and treasure hunters who have long been identified with shipwrecks. Moreover, an underwater "dig" can take years, and analysis and conservation of the artifacts takes exponentially longer. Perhaps for these reasons, nautical archaeologists have been extremely cautious in publishing their findings, often printing no more than highly technical reports in scientific journals. Readers interested in the broader historical implications of a particular wreck have great difficulty locating material about it, and even greater difficulty understanding what they find. Smith's authoritative inclusion of information gleaned from historical shipwrecks constitutes the book's principal strength, not only in Chapter 8 but throughout the text.

A chapter on the political and economic context of the Iberian maritime states introduces the volume. It is followed by a discussion of the evolution of ship types, especially the caravels and *naos* that were the mainstays of early European voyages of exploration. Smith's narrative shows impressive control of the standard works on these topics, although few works published after 1984 are included in the bibliography or in the notes. Discussion of the caravel would have benefitted greatly from Martin Elbl's fine analysis of that vessel's origins. José Luis Casado Soto's pathbreaking work on Spanish ships in the age of discovery should also have been included.

The strongest chapters integrate detailed archaeological evidence with the historical context. This is particularly noteworthy in the chapters on building a ship and on rigging, outfitting, and arming it. Through painstaking work over decades, archaeologists have amassed and studied an impressive collection of major and minor artifacts from a dozen or so wrecks. They apply scientific techniques to map, measure, and analyze the materials in context and to conserve them after they have been relocated to the laboratory. Documentary evidence from historical archives guides the archaeologists to likely shipwreck sites and provides the necessary framework for their findings. Virtually all of the documentary evidence presented in the

book comes from printed sources rather than primary archival research, but Smith handles the sources and secondary works intelligently. Anyone interested in early modern Europe, not just maritime buffs, should appreciate his clear and reasoned commentary about the materials and methods that constituted seafaring technology in Columbus's time and immediately thereafter. The text would have been clarified and strengthened, however, had the author consulted Michel Morineau and José Luis Rubio Serrano on gauging tonnage, and John Guilmartin, Geoffrey Parker, and others on artillery and its role in early exploration.

A brief and somewhat perfunctory chapter on manning and provisioning rounds out the text, though the author's keenest interest remains with the ships themselves and their equipment. The human dimension and the political and bureaucratic background to the ships of discovery receive much less attention.

One of the appendixes, written by Denise C. Lakey, prints a facsimile, transcription, and translation of the inventories of two Spanish caravels associated with Columbus: *Niña*, which accompanied him on three of his four transatlantic voyages, and *Santa Cruz*, cobbled together on Hispaniola from the storm-wrecked remains of other ships. Lakey's work provides a wealth of detail about the rigging and other equipment on these important ships, which will forever exist in the documentary record, even if their physical remains are never found.

The other three appendixes contain brief lists of nautical terms in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. The English list is the most useful. The norms adopted for spelling and translating the Spanish and Portuguese terms are not made clear, which can be very confusing to the uninitiated. For example, the author retains the contemporary use of "ç" when modern spelling would use "z," which complicates a reader's attempt to locate the words in a dictionary, even a historical dictionary. The terms "jarcia" and "xarcia," which manuscripts used interchangeably to mean rigging, are listed separately and defined as different sorts of rigging, surely an untenable assumption. Other questionable renderings of Spanish words in the glossaries and the text also betray a lack of care with the linguistic and documentary base. This is no more than a minor inconvenience for the knowledgeable reader, though it contrasts sharply with the author's exemplary treatment of archaeological evidence. Overall, the book makes an important contribution to scholarship by bringing the findings of nautical archaeology into the mainstream of early modern history. It should be a standard work for anyone interested in European exploration and technology.

CARLA RAHN PHILLIPS

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities



NINA HELLMAN AND NORMAN BROUWER, *A Mariner's Fancy: The Whaleman's Art of Scrimshaw* (New York: South Street Seaport Museum, 1992). 8" x 9", paper, 96 pages, illustrations, index. ISBN 0295-972122. \$22.50.

Some two decades ago the well-known collector and dealer Norman Flayderman took the world of maritime folk art by storm with the publication of *Scrimshaw and Scrimshanders: Whales and Whalemen*. Never before had so many fine examples of the whaleman's art been illustrated, interpreted, and systematically documented. The volume spurred a wider interest in scrimshaw that, despite market fluctuations, the spectre of clever forgeries and, most unusual perhaps, a high level of government regulation, continues to thrive in the 1990s.

By providing a glimpse of the South Street Seaport Museum's collection, *A Mariner's Fancy: The Whaleman's Art of Scrimshaw* continues the process begun in the 1980s of making museum scrimshaw holdings, once considered merely quaint or curious adjuncts to their "real" artifacts, available to a wider audience. Through exhibitions, and especially the medium of print, images and information are made available equally to the arm-chair enthusiast, the serious collector, and the scrimshaw scholar. Such works can provide the small nugget of information that, through the process of stylistic comparison, leads to a new attribution or iconographic interpretation. It's an ongoing process as fluid as the sea itself.

The text by Nina Hellman, a well-known maritime dealer and historian, provides a framework for South Street's highlighted examples. Among the scrimshaw artists represented are familiar names like Edward Burdett, one of the most talented scrimshanders in the American whaling fleet, and the so-called "Pagoda Artisan" who, on the basis of recent stylistic comparison within the collection, now appears to have been a mariner named "S.

Baker." While more attention is given to the teeth, tusks, and other decorative types, the collection does not lack for exquisite examples of utilitarian pieces such as crimpers, swifts, and tools, many of which are illustrated.

An essay on New York City's role as a whaling port by Norman Brouwer, the museum's Curator of Ships, serves to remind us that America's whaling activity was not restricted to traditional centers like New Bedford, Nantucket, and New London. New York certainly fielded a respectable number of whaling vessels, but more importantly, the city served as a financial, manufacturing, and marketing center in support of the industry.

*A Mariner's Fancy* is one of the most lavishly illustrated works on this subject in recent years. The quality of both the color plates and black-and-white photographs adds considerably to the book's value. It would have been helpful if measurements of the illustrated pieces had been included with the captions to provide the uninitiated with a sense of relative scale. And while the vast majority of the pieces came from the collection of museum trustee Jack R. Aron, it might have been useful to note those examples received from other sources, notably the venerable Seamen's Bank for Savings collection recently acquired by the museum. The lack of a comprehensive listing of the artists, vessels, and documentable people and places represented in the collection as a whole will also be felt by researchers.

Thanks to *A Mariner's Fancy*, South Street Seaport Museum's scrimshaw collection has at last received some of the attention that it deserves. May this work serve as a catalyst for further investigations into this splendid art form as well as the myriad contributions of the port of New York to the whaling industry that engendered it.

RICHARD C. MALLEY

The Connecticut Historical Society







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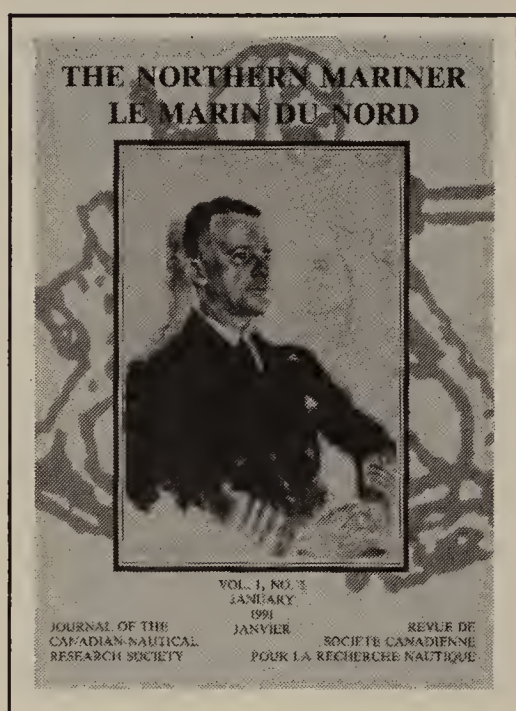
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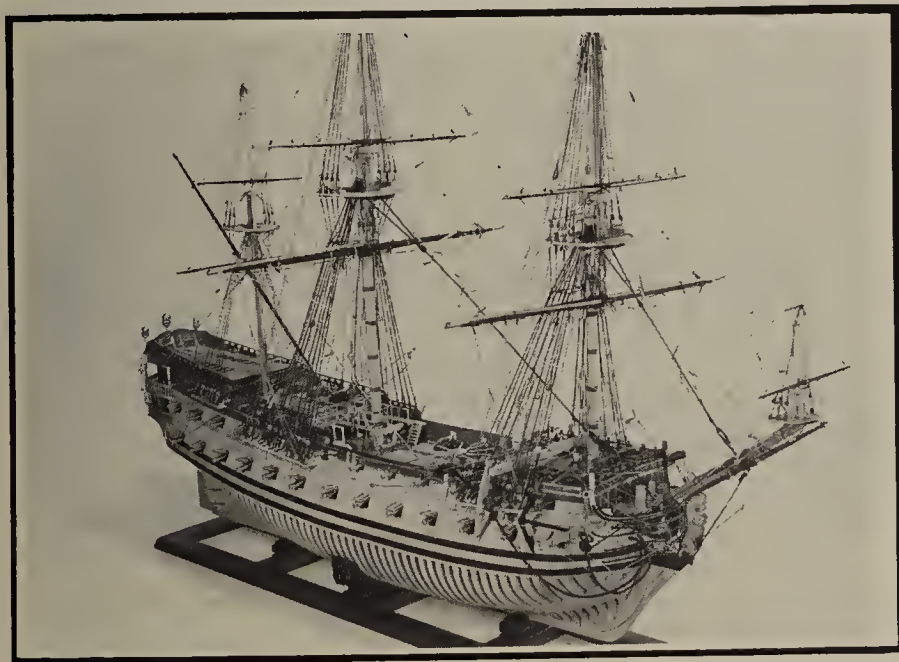
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(Required by 39 U. S. C. 3685)

1. Title of Publication: *The American Neptune*  
A. Publication No. 0003-0155.
2. Date of Filing: *1 October 1993*
3. Frequency of Issue: *Quarterly*  
A. No. of Issues Published Annually: *4*  
B. Annual Subscription Price: *\$32.00 domestic; \$35.00 foreign*
4. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: *East India Square, Salem, MA 01970-0783*
5. Complete Mailing Address of the Headquarters of General Business Offices of the Publisher: *Peabody Essex Museum, East India Square, Salem, MA 01970-0783*
6. Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor:  
Publisher: *Donald S. Marshall, The Peabody Essex Museum, East India Square, Salem, MA 01970-0783*  
Editor: *Timothy J. Runyan, Department of History, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH 44115*  
Managing Editor: *Geraldine M. Ayers, Peabody Essex Museum, East India Square, Salem, MA 01970-0783*
7. Owner: *The Peabody Museum of Salem - Essex Institute, East India Square, Salem, MA 01970-0783*  
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8. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: *None*
9. The Purpose, Function, and Nonprofit Status of this Organization and the Exempt Status for Federal Income Tax Purposes: *Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months.*

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
10. Extent and Nature of Circulation:		
A. Total No. Copies ( <i>Net Press Run</i> )	1,132	1,024
B. Paid Circulation		
1. Sales through Dealers and Carriers Street Vendors and Counter Sales	0	0
2. Mail Subscriptions	762	773
C. Total Paid Circulation ( <i>Sum of 10B1 and 10B2</i> )	762	773
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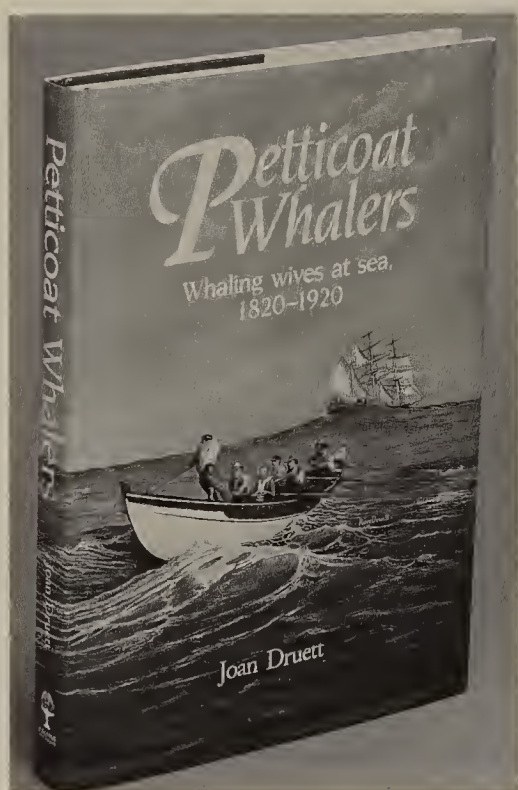
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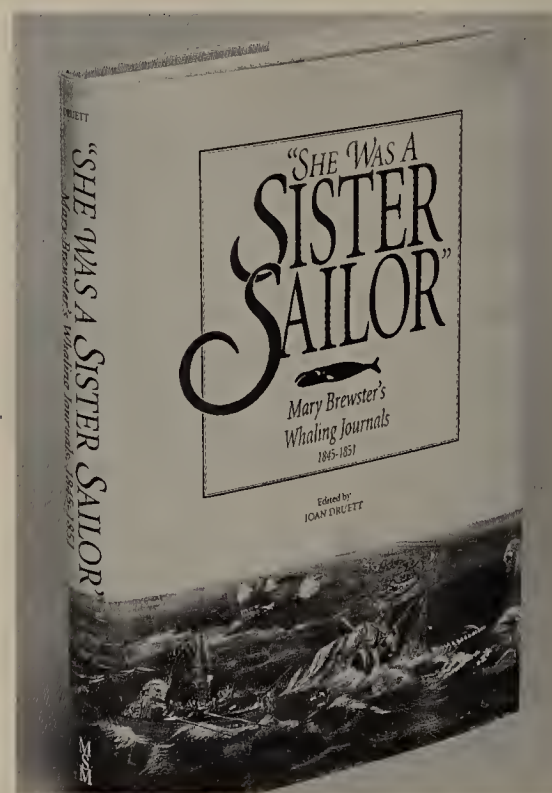
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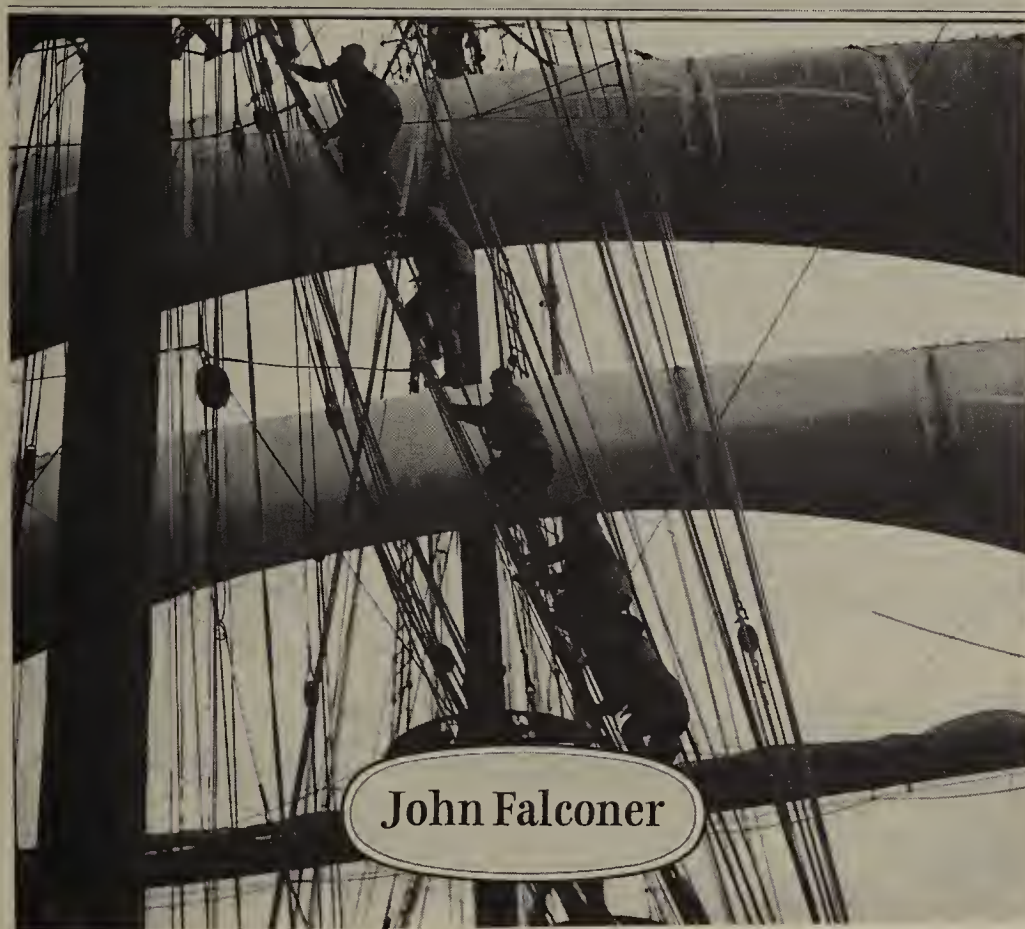
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